

FAITH AND FREEDOM



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FAITH AND FREEDOM

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Editor: E. SHIRVELL PRICE, M.A.

Assistant Editor: A. K. ROSS, B.C.L., M.A.

Associate Editor: JAMES L. ADAMS, Ph.D.

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Editorial

Unity in Worship

UNITY in Worship is essential to the life of any religious movement. All the more is such unity vital in Unitarianism because it has no creed, dogma or theological system, no priesthood with its prestige of Apostolic Succession, nor any doctrine of an authoritarian Church.

By unity in worship we do not, of course, mean uniformity in worship. The last thing we should seek is a stereotyped order of worship, however venerable, however aesthetically satisfying, however adequate it was to those who created or may still use it.

But our worship must express in form and content, in structure and function, the underlying and accepted principles which already constitute our genius and our unity, namely Freedom, Reason and Tolerance. These principles should apply not only to theological belief, human relationships and social action, but to the form and content of our worship. It is only in the light of these principles that all Unitarians can worship together in spirit and in truth.

Our inherited forms of Unitarian worship gave all the freedom desired and, at the same time, preserved an essential unity of purpose within the theistic tradition. Some of the newer forms of service in humanist churches are creating a new pattern of unity and are building up a distinctively different tradition of worship. But that which unites both theists and humanists as Unitarians is seldom central or explicit in either the old or the new. Only occasionally is something said or done which is *completely* satisfying to theists and humanists alike. (We do not refer to the sermon, which often may serve to bring together those who were alienated, rather than united, in the devotional part of the service, nor to the sphere of social action).

There is no widely accepted form of worship known to us which succeeds in combining the wider unity which embraces both humanist and theist worshipper. If it exists let it be known and acclaimed as such universally amongst us. If not, let it be a challenge to the unity we experience that we create such a form of worship.

Are we attempting the impossible? We are not prepared to believe for one moment that it is impossible. All three principles which already unite us are creative of unity. Are we not justified in expecting that, as we ascribe significant worth to them, they will avail to draw the divided self of each worshipper into wholeness, and all men together in purpose, at one and the same time?

There is evidence that we have failed hitherto to achieve this unity in worship because we have been too obsessed with the vocalised differences between humanists and theists, instead of concentrating our attention on the things in which we are already united. So we have asked the wrong questions and, inevitably, have received the wrong answers. So, we make a fresh start!

In our previous *Editorial* we welcomed the challenge of religious humanism to traditional theism within our movement for the express reason that it made for sincerity and vitality in worship. We wish to develop this and to consider how we may overcome the present practical difficulties inherent in the situation which exists wherever humanists and theists are experiencing any frustration in worshipping together.

We hold the view that the humanist challenge compels theists and humanists alike to exemplify the principles of freedom, reason and tolerance at a higher level than we, or any other church, has ever reached before. The tension within Unitarianism, created by this challenge, must continue and be made to yield this wider and deeper unity of religious faith. The tension is destroyed and the strength of our witness to the values we affirm sadly weakened if any liberal congregation separates itself off in any way or becomes partisan in its purpose. The sphere in which this tension will ultimately prove most productive of the higher unity is within the individual congregation; *not* between whole congregations or between groups of churches. Congregations whose members are either all theists or all humanists, or where the minority feels that it is really out of place, are likely to miss both the vision and the reality of the greater unity which this creative tension can and does give. Without close personal contact between individuals with differing convictions neither will have opportunity to understand that the contraries they hold are not negations at the level of the higher unity, but are the conditions for achieving this unity. What is not often understood (and never, by the partisans) is that these contraries exist not only between one group and another, and between one individual and another, but within each man's psyche or soul. Unless liberal religion is to become lop-sided and Unitarians lose their genius, their worship must continue to help them to face and to come to terms with the opposing principle within themselves, that they may find their wholeness.

This is another and deeper reason why the practical difficulty experienced by theists and humanists in worshipping together in unity in the same act of worship is a crucial matter for Unitarianism as a religious movement. It should engage our serious attention and unremitting effort until a satisfactory solution has been found.

Worship is the crucial test of the real unity of any church, as it is also the *raison d'être* for the existence of that church. If unity is not sought after, consciously exalted and progressively achieved in and through worship, there is no full satisfaction in that worship, no sustaining fellowship and no religious community—Christian, or any other. We take it, then, that the apparently diverse needs of theists and humanists in worship in our churches constitute a challenge to our real unity as a religious movement. This challenge we must meet by evolving a form of worship which, in psychological

structure and content, satisfies the needs of all those who share it. The real unity, and therefore the future health and strength of Liberal Religion, depends upon our moving forward from the present indeterminate position where the "other" form of service is at times felt to be the negation of what a man feels is true for him.

Where the congregation is of one mind there is no practical difficulty experienced, though it is not good in a religious movement that, apart from a wide variety of local preferences and practices, there should develop, over the years, two distinct types of churches and forms of worship. Without any motivating desire and implemented effort to achieve unity between differing congregations, they will inevitably become more entrenched in their attitudes and distinctive forms of worship, so that the differences between theist and humanist come to have greater importance than the underlying principles and truths which keep liberal religion one in heart, mind and purpose. Moreover, attention to, and exaltation of, differences begets a partisanship which comes to assume a superiority hardly distinguishable from bigotry. As the high churchman said to the other, "Well, you worship God in your way: we worship Him in His."

Bigotry is fortunately rare with us, but its presence is even less likely in a mixed congregation of humanists and theists, where the practical difficulties of worshipping together in unity are present. It is here that the tension is most poignantly and urgently felt. Here, through expostulation and response, through searching query and careful survey, through questionnaire and discussion, minister and divided congregation seek for that which will unite them in that sphere and in that place, above all other spheres and places, where they know they should and must be at one. With a traditional form of theistic worship and a considerable, and possibly growing, number of humanist members, the minister carries the tension in himself. Anguish is not too strong a word to describe what he feels when he realizes that the solution of the impasse is beyond his powers. He would, in the attempt to favour those most dissatisfied, try to give them a service which would meet their demands; but he cannot do so without going against the accepted tradition which is still probably to the satisfaction of the majority of his congregation. And then comes the realization that in the conduct of public worship he *cannot* give himself, as he should, with wholeness of mind and heart, to lead in a form of religious worship which is not absolutely true to his own sense and apprehension of the holy. The freedom of the pulpit is only half the story of the Unitarian minister's dedication to the truth as he sees it. Even more exacting is the responsibility that every prayer and reading, every significant movement and inflection of voice, shall be as sincere and genuine an expression of the spirit and truth that is in him as he can humanly make it. How, then, can he change to order? And when those, who would have another form of service realize this, they cannot ask him to dissemble

and play a part that is not truly his own. In this realization a real basis for the solution of a tragic dilemma begins to appear.

No practical solution has yet emerged but it becomes clear that the purpose of worship utterly transcends the self-conscious needs for which a man thinks he needs satisfaction: the end of worship is an experience of unity with that which transcends time and place. Once get men aware of this goal and they begin to see their varying theologies as the clothes they have donned to suit the climate of opinion which they have encountered. They stop demanding that everyone else must adopt the same canons of fashion. The pilgrimage has already started with deepened mutual respect for the other's integrity. All share their insights, as they share their joys and sorrows. They are already a Beloved Community with a common memory—the tradition of freedom, reason and tolerance—a present realisation and joy in fellowship, and a shared hope that they will reach their goal together.

So it is because of the challenge of these difficulties, rather than in spite of them, that it is better to accept and maintain the tension within a congregation, rather than that theists and humanists should gather in separate congregations for their worship.

How, then, shall this creative tension be maintained, and the higher unity fostered? Certain things are clear. Mainly, at this stage, they are indications of the ways which have been tried and found wanting. Unity is not to be achieved by pious exhortation to tolerate the other's point of view, while keeping him at arm's length, as one would a queer sort of person. Nor is it to be found at the end of an intellectual discussion alone, though the dispassionate attempt to understand the nature of the differences of opinion is an essential step in preparing the ground for unity. Moreover, honest differences of opinion as between theist and humanist cannot be dismissed as being "just a matter of words." A semantic study of differences has its place but will not, of itself, bring unity out of diversity. It is too often a very superficial concern which ends a discussion with the platitudinous remark, "Well, after all we're all after the same thing."

Nor will the emotionally-centred reaction to real differences avail us anything, as when John Wesley closed his appeal for unity, in the face of divergent beliefs and practices concerning the Lord's Supper, with the words: "Let all opinion alone on one side or the other. Only give me thine hand." That hand-clasp is already given.

Through lack of personal encounter we have ourselves, in the past, all too easily assumed that the religious humanist was unreasonably shy of the God concept, instead of discerning that he was seriously trying to give expression to the faith that was in him. Did we not tell the story of the schoolboy who ended his essay on the authorship of the plays of Shakespeare with the cryptic observation "If Shakespeare wasn't written by Shakespeare it was written by somebody else of the same name." No, the humanist's need cannot

be met by trying to persuade him that he is, all the time, really worshipping God, and that he is just being exasperating in refusing to name the author of the Universe!

Nor, on the other hand, does it avail to rationalize or humanize the traditional forms of Christian worship. Some twelve years ago an English Unitarian minister, at the annual Minister's Institute at Great Hucklow, submitted a "Revised Version" of the Lord's Prayer, which should serve as a warning to any who expect that the result will be other than a complete travesty of the natural idiom of worship for either. This minister expressed the view that, if present tendencies towards naturalism and humanism were to continue much further, it would become logically necessary to revise our hymnals and liturgical services so as to make them consistent with the new ideas. Although facetious, he disclaimed any intention of being frivolous or irreverent. Here is his modern version:

"Our hypothetical Father, who art in our cosmic consciousness,
 Rationalized be thy name;
 Thy immanent power evolve,
 Thy will be subjectively felt, as it is objectified in nature.
 Give us this day our daily bread.
 And liberate our complexes, as we psycho-analyse those of
 others;
 And lead us not into anthropomorphism,
 But deliver us from metaphysics,
 For thine is the universal Urge, the monistic Unity, the
 mystical Oomph,
 For threescore years and ten,
 And then,

Amen!

Brilliant, isn't it? But how beside the point! How impossible!

The humanist challenge comes from the depths of human experience. It cannot be met without earnest candour, sympathetic imagination and profound humility from those who would understand what man in his present predicament is trying, often haltingly, to say. To accept the humanist challenge as an authentic religious challenge does not mean anticipating the end of mystery in religion, but rather that beneath the myths which have hitherto been accepted as final and ultimate, there are mysterious shifts of emphasis in the depths of the human psyche.

It is not without significance that Carl Jung has found that, whereas the majority of people project the divine image in their dreams and visions, there are some who do not. With these the place of the divine image is taken by the ancient mandala image. In the modern mandala, (and Jung is inclined to believe that it is a modern development), there is no deity, and there is also no submission or reconciliation to a deity. The place of the deity seems to be taken by the wholeness of man. This, surely, suggests that in worship, there are those who quite naturally worship God, while there are

others who, as naturally, just worship; and their worship is, at its height, an experience of becoming whole, of rising into fulness of being.

How appropriate it is to remind ourselves at this point that the supreme poet-theologian of this deep awakening experience of the spiritual man, through all the struggles and vicissitudes of the soul, is William Blake. His Fourfold Vision is prophetic of an experience through which we all should pass, however we rationalize or explain it theologically. But it would be as false to try to force Blake's imagery into the *I-Thou* symbolism of theistic worship as it would be to impose the mandala image on traditional prayers of confession, or wrest the Fourfold Vision from the plane of soul-resolving conflict and apply it to our communion with the beauty of nature.

It may be that traditional theistic worship, Unitarian as well as orthodox, has something necessarily child-like about it. After all, the most mature men know that their greatest moments have a child-like innocence about them. Well, our worship will still have to mediate this child-like *élan* for those who must need pray as to a Father who seeth in secret. Jesus did not say that the prayer which he gave to his disciples was a pattern of his own spiritual communion. He gave them a prayer suitable to their limited apprehension of the divine. They were as children in his sight, sometimes wayward and immature children. He had to teach them in the parables and even then often had to interpret these. And Paul, for all his self-assurance, knew that he had not yet attained; "now we see as in a glass darkly, but then, face to face." And there are always precocious children who think they know all the answers. We must, ourselves, tread warily. We cannot advance in unity unless we advance together.

We have been able to do little more positively than to open up certain avenues towards our goal. We intend to pursue the matter further in the belief that we can find a unifying form of worship which will yield fuller satisfaction to differing needs and differing temperaments. We believe that we have several independent clues as to what those needs are. And then, we may find, to a greater degree than at present, thinker, poet, mystic and lover, all finding the fulfilment of their several inadequacies in the unifying sacrament of Unitarian worship. What is clear is that the practical difficulty is insurmountable if we try to combine theistic and humanistic forms, as they are at present, in one act of worship. The problem will be solved, if solved it can be, by withdrawing from the impasse and re-examining the meaning and purpose of our worship in the light of the fundamental principles in which we are already united.

If our main contentions are well founded, and our sense of urgency judged opportune, we hope we shall have provoked a concern which will be sustained in ministers' fraternals and group sessions, conferences and church meetings, on both sides of the Atlantic. We are sure that much thought has already been given to

this problem, and it is more than likely that some real advance towards a solution has already been made which is unknown to us. We shall therefore welcome news of such, together with papers, letters and comments from any who feel they have a contribution to make. We also ask to receive copies of actual forms of service and any plan or material which has seemed to achieve a unifying purpose in worship. Especially we seek a form of service which explicitly exalts the three great principles. We shall be well satisfied if this Journal is used to sort and co-ordinate the findings and experiences resulting from the rich variety of worship forms already extant in our churches. It is a creative enterprize upon which we are engaged and, whatever the outcome, the effort cannot but yield rich fruits as we work together.

As a simple but significant example of an affirmation of a manifold unity, which might win the assent of all Unitarians, we append some words which came to us, in a shorter form, from America.

"We belong to the Church Universal,

*Which treasures all ancient wisdom, measures all modern thought,
and glories in the growing vastness of knowledge;*

*Which recognises in all prophets a harmony, in all scriptures a
unity, and through all dispensations a continuity;*

*Which abjures all that separates and divides, and magnifies
brotherhood and peace;*

*Which seeks discipline in social duty, freedom through truth,
justice through mercy, and love through sacrifice;*

*And which shall make of all sects, classes, nations and races,
one fellowship of men.*

*To serve this Church and all its members, throughout the world,
we pledge the allegiance of our hearts and our hands."*

Letter to the Editor: Questions to Dr. Tillich

SIR,

THANK you for helping us in the Autumn issue (p.1 ff) to get better acquainted with Paul Tillich, whom we have always found both learned and stimulating! Is it legitimate to raise a question his article leaves in our minds? It may seem to him neither interesting nor important, but it was a genuine reaction from where we stood.

In developing what he regards, rightly we are sure, as the very practical relationship between theology, existentialism, and psychoanalysis, he of course emphasizes some commonness or kinship of aim. All of these disciplines (if we may hitch theology on to religion) are engaged practically in a kind of healing, or the winning of a foothold in life, or finding salvation. For all of them there is a human predicament and a glimmer of a way out. Work can be done either with a candle, or with God's sunlight, or with something in between. But there is kinship in the aim. Good; we trust we understand that.

Then as to commonness of method: as concerns psychoanalysis and theology at least, the method is described as "acceptance." Tillich says the psychoanalyst heals people who have opened themselves to him, by accepting them in spite of any amount of unacceptableness. The question of improving them is simply ignored by the healer, at least for the time being. He makes the patient feel that he has a friend, or at least somebody with whom he can have ordinary conference and other practical relation, without wearing a cloak, and in nakedness of soul. Likewise, Christianity's teaching is the acceptance of the unacceptable. Christ came to save sinners. We are all in a predicament of "existence" so deep that there is no hope of our getting out of it by our own efforts, or by our contributing anything positive at all. There is no co-operation with God except in an act of throwing all the burden on Him. There is nothing for it but to get accepted in spite of unmitigated unacceptableness.

That great step passed, there does come into action a third principle of "teleology" (alongside "existence" and "essence"), which Tillich does not here develop. It may be the place where he would take care of our difficulty, the absence of any niche or pocket to house exceptions or to bring in another principle of active religion.

The analysis of Christianity as "acceptance" recalled a passage in the first part of Mr. Gandhi's autobiography, where he is in South Africa on a mission to his kinspeople. The Christian missionaries try to convert him and they succeed in interesting him for a time. But, when the situation simplifies itself, it appears they want to save him from the consequences of his sins, whereas he wants to be saved from the sins themselves, or the habit of them. He wants to become a better man, with the help of religion. He reports that he could not get them interested in *his* problem. They wanted to save him from the *consequences* of his sins, or his Sin. One imagines they used the singular "Sin" a good deal, as Tillich says we ought. But Mr. Gandhi concludes wryly that it is no use to continue the discussion, and loses his interest in missionary Christianity as known. Not, of course, in Jesus or his teaching!

Suppose a modest sinful man, whether or not he has been to a psychoanalyst and whether or not he has derived some help, reads Mr. Tillich's forceful article and says: "But a man's real desire is to be, or to become, acceptable. Acceptable to himself in the first place it may be. Then to God, though not as being "good" but only as having some positive value. And then acceptable to good men. A man does not want to be accepted by God as a total wash-out. He does not want anybody's pity, not even God's. He does not exactly want to be forgiven his sins or Sin. What he wants mostly is to be a better and more significant person. In fact, even as the old Greeks taught in philosophy and perhaps Jesus did in his common contacts, he wants to *realize* himself as a valid human being or a child of God born in wedlock."

It is certainly not the question whether everybody in these days could learn to talk that way, even if he had not been otherwise conditioned. It is not a question about any majority. One supposes that St. Paul, or St. Augustine, or somebody who really *felt* religion in the way of "acceptance" as described, started a path going that way. Others since, very much in earnest in their way, have deepened the path and worn it until it has become more than a fashion of speech. It has become a powerful and self-generating convention. It seems to help and heal in a way we all should recognize. But it may be too exclusive.

The real question, the question we are putting, may be whether any valid man can feel and talk as Mr. Gandhi did. Though we do not have to take our example from as far away as that. It is said that, when Thoreau lay dying, the minister asked him if he had made his peace with God. "I have never quarrelled with Him," was the reply.

Most of us could not quite say that. I am afraid I have quarrelled with God many times. And I have bitterly repented it. But Thoreau appears to me a valid and truthful kind of person, starting from the personal experience just as those Existentialists say we should. And I do not feel much, if at all, interested in having my old sins forgiven, or in being "accepted." I always felt accepted in spots. My interests are teleological, as Tillich hints in a place or two that some class of people's might be. Just what class does he mean? If the "accepted," that makes me feel as if I am left on the fence.

Mr. Tillich is certainly interesting and valuable when he puts existentialism and psychoanalysis into their place in the history of modern philosophy. His approach should broaden the outlook of schools of the hour and make some of them more sympathetic towards religion and its historic vocabulary—as they ought to be.

We suggest that he might have gone further into the whole history of Western philosophy. The two great opponents, from Descartes's time to ours, he forthrightly names as philosophy of Consciousness and philosophy of the Un- or Sub-Consciousness. The party of the second part is illustrated in existentialism and depth-psychology, in Freud and Nietzsche, and so on. Might he not have gone back further than Pascal and brought the whole of historic Mysticism into the second part? In fact one supposes the Greeks felt the same conflict between clear-cut intellectual understanding and something else, though, when you see how universal the conflict is in philosophy, maybe it begins to take on a dialectical aspect.

Having recently been reading Whitehead's criticism of Descartes and his development of the opposition between Consciousness and Feeling in philosophy, one feels that the citing of Whitehead would have helped show how universal are the conflicts and issues of philosophy, and how no one philosophy can take care of the interests of religion—especially for the wide-wide world.

Center Conway, N.H.

Sidney S. Robins

The Challenge of Humanism:

I—A Theist's Reply

E. G. LEE*

I HAVE read Mr. Mason's article in the Spring issue through three times. I had heard of the impact the article made on ministers assembled in conference at Great Hucklow in September, 1955, and I was eager to study the cause of it. I was all the more eager because any sign of urgent thinking or even a sense of crisis in thought is welcome in British Unitarianism. For the most part, as I see it—and I am willing to stick my neck out a long way—there is a wretched amount of intellectual inertia. The old acceptances follow year after year; creative opportunities have gone by and hardly one challenge to new belief stirs above the surface.

I therefore tackled Mr. Mason's article with some excitement. I am a Theist, although why I should give myself a name, save for misguided convenience' sake, I do not know. I read the article with all my prejudices wide open, but I had enough discipline to say to myself, "You must read the article not to attack it but to understand." And I think I did understand, although Mr. Mason may not be very happy about it. I could only hear what he was not saying, rather than what he was saying, for of the latter I could not make head or tail.

What is humanism? If I am to take the article as a guide, I simply do not know. "Man is the measure of all things." What precisely is that? Is Hitler a man and is he the measure of all thing? Is Gandhi a man and is he the measure? Are both of them somehow mixed up together in some muddled way to be the measure? I do not know. Must I choose Gandhi to be the measure rather than Hitler, if so, why? Is Hitler less of a man than Gandhi, and what is meant by being less of a man? Is Gandhi or any other "great figure" (but what on earth is meant by that?) to be the ideal by which everything is to be measured? Must I take man in the lump to be the measure? If so what is man in the lump? I genuinely and fairly do not know.

"The individual man's awareness of his dependence on Man the Collective." It is a suspicious sign when capitals have to be used to designate what on the surface would appear to be ordinary words, but what is Man the Collective? I am an Englishman and perforce for a long time have been a student of affairs and an attempted student of culture, but for the life of me I do not know what is meant, say, by the English Man the Collective. If he exists in all the conventions that are supposed to belong to an Englishman

* Personal note on page 136

then I am not dependent on him in the least, on the whole I am very much at war with him. But even as I am writing those words I know I am kidding myself about the "him." I know no such person or a mass of such persons. If I were asked the nature of his religion, of his reactions to television, of his intimate family life, of all the mass of things that go to make up a culture of a "him" then I am completely flummoxed. Heaven save me from being dependent on "him"! But this is only for English culture. What of all the other cultures in the world from Moscow to Bangkok? Presumably Man the Collective is intended to include those. I am intensely ignorant of all of them, of their inner nature, and how ordinary men click in them. I do not know even how a Buddhist responds to Buddha. I can guess, as he can guess at my Christianity, but I am as profoundly ignorant of the inner meaning of his religion as he is of mine. "Man the Collective" seems to say something factual. In fact it says nothing of fact at all—in the sense that I gather Mr. Mason means by fact—it is an escape term, allows something to be brought in which Mr. Mason thinks he is driving out, symbolism, mysticism, and all the vague infinities which are attached to this man, and which are not supposed to belong to him at all.

Similarly with "the Spirit of Man"—again capital letters. One gathers that Mr. Mason would be a bit suspicious of the soul: hand it, or whatever it is possible to put in its place, over to the psycho-analyst and he will do a lot with it. Quite true, he will, and a lot that is good. But the soul, or whatever is supposed to take its place, is still there, and as Mr. Mason rightly surmises there is a great deal of dirt in it—or isn't there? And what is meant by dirt? But who is going to deal with the Spirit of Man? Even if "the collective ideal is epitomised" under this term? Presumably it must mean something. Then what is Spirit? Has Man the Collective a Collective Spirit? Where is it? What is it? Who shall purge it or analyse it? Why dump the soul on to the psychologists and not the Spirit of Man? even if it is only an epitome or something? Or can it be that Mr. Mason is once again saying what he thinks he isn't saying, that there is something hovering around man somewhere never seen on land or sea? On the surface, the words mean nothing. Beneath the surface they are affirming what—as it appears to this prejudiced person—what Mr. Mason is vehemently denying.

It may be thought that I am being finicky in asking for words to mean something, and trying to put Mr. Mason in a dilemma that doesn't exist. But he writes as follows:

"Similarly there was no Beauty until man appeared with eye and heart to appreciate it, hand and lip to express it; no Truth until man appeared to search for it and form opinions about it; no Goodness until man was confronted with alternative choices and had to make moral decisions." (Those wonderful capitals!)

No Beauty, Truth or Goodness until men found it! Where then was it hiding until man came along? By implication of Mr. Mason's words it wasn't hiding; it wasn't there at all. He escapes the statement, which presumably he does not wish to make, that Beauty, Truth and Goodness have objective validity; he gives the picture, a very true one, of these values becoming visible, alive and active as man appreciates, searches, and is confronted by them. But presumably they must be *there*, somewhere, for all these things to happen to them. Mr. Mason has published some beautiful poems. One begs leave to doubt that in his poetry about the outer world he is saying to himself "all this in terms of Beauty isn't there at all. I am just inventing all this." Presumably he does not believe that, or expect other people to believe it. There is a Beauty presumably with which he can have commerce. In effect he is saying the infinities hover around him seeking for their elucidation. But that is what he is saying out of sight. With his outer words he is saying that man is everything and that without man the infinities are nothing. But the whole of man's response assumes that they are something, and something whether he responds or not. Does not then the Beauty that is to be created in the future exist now? Inform the artist of the future that it does not, and he would reply that you were trying to bring his art to nothing but dust and ashes.

Mr. Mason's creed is: "Out of the dust I have come, praised be the power and glory locked up in that dust and released by energy and motion into such myriad excellencies." And he is thrilled at some point—and why should he not be?—at standing on a peak point of Creation. But glory and power? What is the Scientific Humanist going to make of that? A wonderful drama is being depicted—by Mr. Mason; he very nearly falls into poetry about it. Some great transformation scene is taking place. There is not merely Mr. Mason and a piece of dust. Not merely an "it" of a man and an "it" of something else. There is power and glory passing between them. There is the thrill of drama of something extraordinary taking place, so extraordinary that it finds expression in a creed, and like all creeds finds its way into poetic diction. But alas! alas! Did the dust say "I am going to be Mr. Mason"? Did all the power and the glory, the energy and the motion say that? And if they did not is Mr. Mason a mere accident, and is he excited about it? No! He admits drama. He admits life, moving, conscious and real that produced him, not merely biological life—whatever that may be—but life on a cosmic scale, a great and mighty drama beside which one may guess the drama of the Bible for him fades into insignificance. Man is all, and what a wonderful business it is that he has been produced as the all. If there is no consciousness of purpose in this, no sense of guidance or of going somewhere, what is there? And where was this consciousness and purpose before man ever thought of man, and before he even imagined he could measure everything by what he was? Admit the triumph of

the dust turning into man, and the triumph of a great deal else is admitted also, and it cannot exist simply in the dust or the man. Mr. Mason is pushing himself into what he calls a "semantic tyranny." He is being forced to admit that there is a "Greater-than-Energy," and a "Deeper-than-Wisdom." Beneath his words this isn't a tyranny at all, it is a truth. No, Truth!

But a Theist, at least this one, need not claim to be so confident as Mr. Mason about things as they are, even about the nature of man. There may be more room—far more room—for development and spiritual appraisal in Theism than in the attempted mystic Humanism—at least, as explained by Mr. Mason. This Theist calls himself one for a number of reasons, but one of the strongest is that he wishes to doubt, simply because, as a matter of life and death, truth is discovered through doubt. I want, for instance, to throw my whole weight of scepticism and sometimes revulsions upon what is conventionally good, right, and accepted. It does not thrill me. I get no satisfaction out of being on the peak of Hitler's creation, or out of the children starving in the different parts of the world through the iniquities of man, or even out of Albert Schweitzer going off to Africa to try to make up to the Africans for all that the white races have inflicted upon them. I desire to know humility before it, rather than triumph. It is a reasonable desire and, one may judge, has little enough to do with temperament. I recognise human institutions for what they are, and I could not be an agnostic in relation to them if they were not there. They exist; I accept them; but for me they are entirely relative, not as contrasted with some imagined good of the future—which, after all, may not seem so good to the men of the future as it does to us—but with a good, here and now, which condemns them in their imperfections. By that I mean that the accepted religions and conventions of our contemporary society are entirely imperfect; like all such conventions they inflict, in one way or another, brutality, hardship, and, more frequently, mere imitative acceptance upon the men who, perforce, must live by them. They can only stand or be justified by such a person as myself in so far as they hold within themselves, and the challenges brought to them, something nearer perfection in the future. One can hope that human relations will become more intrinsically honest, and that the human spirit will demand a fuller experience than the kind of routine acceptance that lies implicit in most human institutions. Therefore I am forced in my agnosticism to hold myself aloof from much that is considered right and proper around me. I accept it only because of the belief that buried within it there is something different that will offer something purer—and I use the word with deliberation—in the future.

So far, perhaps Mr. Mason would say "Amen." Particularly to the "something buried within" the "human spirit"! But I could not, I think, accept my own agnosticism, or more properly,

use its needs, unless I believed that underlying all human institutions there is something finally more real and ultimate than they. That is to say, I could not criticise or, far more harshly, doubt, unless I believed that human institutions—or, for that matter, the human beings within them—were not a reflected glory of something more permanent than they. If humanity is the sum of things entire, then the sum of things entire for me is creaky, waterlogged and altogether imperfect. I cannot believe in that imperfection, believe, in the sense that it demands my attachment and my life. I cannot believe for the simple reason that I cannot help contrasting it with a perfection which reveals to me the imperfection. And that perfection does not exist in some mythical future here on earth. I am not in the least attracted by paradisaical conditions of that kind. I have an idea that I should feel about them as I feel about the present paradisaical conditions—for, as such, they are, when contrasted with so much of the material misery of the past. I doubt because I know. That is to say, I know that all I see around me is imperfect and I can only know this because of the inevitable contrast I am forced to make. There is something different from the makeshift conventionality of human existence, otherwise I should not be able to see it as it is for me.

It does not help in this situation to hope that in some future time that much that causes me doubt now will be made whole. The painful truth of the human situation is that human beings will always be human, no matter how they “improve,” and that in every form of human triumph there will always be some weakness. To write otherwise is to assume the existence of a being who is not human, and I am not in the least interested in him, particularly when he is put forward as a representative of humanity. I doubt if I could find any satisfactory unity between myself and some anticipated paragon of the future. For myself I bow him out, and I would rather find my unity with the “failures” of the past. I belong to them; they, at least, have existed and are like myself. To be united with me, or for me to be united with him, a man must be somehow as I am. The truth of the future in humanity, even if expressed in higher conduct and less frictional relationships, can never be absolute in itself; it will always be “in a mess”; it will still be relative truth, not relative to any future but to an absolute truth that forces the present comparisons upon me.

I am consequently driven to the conclusion that to doubt—and I need to doubt—there must be some life different from human life, and different from any glimpse of anything in nature that causes awe in me.

Another reason for Theism can be discovered too in that need to doubt. I want, if need be, to reject the universe—lock, stock and barrel. I want to be free to tell the universe just what I think of it, in the manner of a considerable number of prophets, poets, artists, and philosophers and, I dare say to-day, a number of scientists. I want to reject the universe. I wish to revolt against it. I do not wish to

accept its cruelty and pain without question. There are many questions I want to ask of it and, to be quite frank, I cannot enjoy the asking—as, I suppose, neither did some authors, for instance, the author of the Book of Job. My search is not the search of a scientist, who I presume can be continuously stimulated and satisfied by the collection of facts and manipulating them to bring new factual situations into being. (Although one would like to hear what a scientist has to say about that!) My search is found in the need to be at home in the universe, whilst revolting continuously against much that I find in it. Now, I don't think I could cope with that situation in what might be described as a dead universe, not even in a universe which, in Mr. Mason's myth, has produced him from the grains of dust of a past of which he can know nothing. In fact I don't think my situation would arise in a universe that was dead. I revolt because I am conscious of something that I can revolt against, that I can call to account for "nature red in tooth and claw." I cannot revolt against a brick wall, but I can against what I may call the sublimity of nature. I happen to know what is hidden in that sublime. I accept the sublime; I have to; just because of the witness and the life in it; but nevertheless I can still question it; I can still seek within it for the truths that I need. I can exclaim, if need be, "you are not for me," but I could not exclaim that unless there were something in it, calling me, seeking my attachment. If there were not something in the nature of the universe which imposed itself upon me, in what William James called a *Thou*, I do not know how I could revolt. I still want to question and go on questioning: I want to have that right and to possess that power; but I don't think I could feel that right or possess that power in a universe which made no response. I admit that there seem to be many who can obtain the fullest satisfaction out of merely asking questions of facts. The brick wall is no brick wall for them, but a universe to be divided and understood in its physical composition. But the agnosticism of that attitude is, as far as I understand it, not agnosticism at all; it is an activity of the mind in which no doubt is felt except the doubt about possible hypotheses. But if anyone imagines that human life, with all its personal relationships, its tragedies as well as its fulfilment, with inevitable old age and death waiting around the corner, can be lived on that level, all I can say is, "I make you a gift of it, for I cannot begin to understand it. You are inventing a cypher and calling it a man." I desire to doubt about the whole major sum of things entire, and I could not doubt in that way, I could not even care, if the *Thou* were not there to challenge my response. Therefore to be a being, an existence in this universe, I must believe that there is being and existence in it to enable me to reach the stature of what I can call manhood. I think I should call it soulhood. Mind demands that somehow all things should be understood in one moment of comprehension. A philosophical system, for instance, no matter how prolonged and

intricate its composition, rests upon the intuition that at one given moment it, and all it hopes to explain, can be understood. So at some given moment the human thing must be something more than a thing, and perceive infinities beyond itself. In other words, find something "Greater-than-energy" or "Deeper-than-Wisdom," which Mr. Mason thinks is "semantic tyranny." This, risking misunderstanding, may be called the action of the soul; the realisation of the human being as something more than life or existence in the descriptive sense, but life and existence aware of itself, and in this awareness acknowledging an awareness beyond itself. Because I wish not only to believe but also to doubt, I accept Theism—or rather Theism accepts me.

A third and last reason lies in what I conceive Humanism to be. Humanism, as I understand it (and as in the whole drift of Mr. Mason's article, if one, once again, looks beneath the words, in which it is presented), cannot be confined to isolated particular situations, nor is it limited in scope at any particular time. Any action of Mr. Mason's at any time, personal as well as social, has a whole inexplicable culture around it. It is hardly possible to speculate in detail how far back that culture goes, or indeed what is meant by that phrase "far back," or in what manner it includes the future, or how inclusive it is of the present. There can, even apart from culture, hardly be any limit, beginning or end, to any conception of humanity—the humanity which must enclose every individual act. It stretches back into the past, it includes the present and, in contemplation and anticipation, stretches into the future. In short it bears all the impression of mysticism, that realisation of a truth too immense to be brought within the reach of what is called immediately rational—rational I mean in the limitation of ideas. And it is that mysticism which runs through Mr. Mason's paper. He does not say, "let us get on with the human job without bothering about questions which appear to have no answer"—which is a workable but an entirely unreasonable form of mysticism. Mr. Mason wants to get on with the human job and ask the questions at the same time—and he lands himself precisely into the kind of mysticism which his words are intended to deny. His argument rests upon the assumed fact of humanity, total humanity, and that obviously cannot be made concrete or factual in imagination, in spite of its seeming claims that it can be done. Imagination cannot embrace as fact all the culture of the world, present and past, not to mention the future. We know little enough about our own isolated contemporary cultures, let alone other people's. Therefore, as it appears to me, Mr. Mason's humanism rests upon mysticism, that is to say upon something that cannot be described as "rational," and to me it is a second-rate mysticism.

One reason can be offered. Man is a moral being. He has to give an account in moral terms, namely in terms of worth and value, of all his ethical actions. Now morality, as I conceive it cannot be

limited to time and place. What is done in terms of convention—and much of what Mr. Mason suggests is being done comes down to convention—is not necessarily right. I am a child of my time. True! But if I acted merely according to the conventions of this time I should be a moral automaton and nothing more. In order to be a free moral being, that is a being conscious of choice and of its profound importance, I must act not merely in my time, but as far as I can understand it, in all time. I must in a certain sense be free of society and make my own choices. I must stand alone—but with what? I cannot stand alone with my own self-will, that would be moral anarchy, indeed, not morality at all. I cannot stand alone with humanity because humanity is as I am, or is some mystic apprehension of being that is human, all too human. Humanity is incomplete and imperfect, and I desire that my moral action should belong to a conception of being that bears no imperfection. I do not want my action to be right or wrong just here and now. I do not believe that such a desire belongs to the moral sense. I want it in some way to be right, not wrong, absolutely, for all time and all places. My action, for many reasons, may fall short of that; but that is what I desire; that is the compulsion behind moral action. Let it belong to the eternal verities and not to what is convenient and proper at the moment. No doubt I shall belong to the moment, and its convenience and propriety will impose its limitations upon me. Nevertheless I desire to break through those limitations. If I did not desire this, there would be no change in moral conduct and, consequently, no progression in human society. I am bound to say that I do not wish to base any argument about the rightness or wrongness of moral conduct upon any progression or otherwise of human society. The progression of human society depends upon my capacity to stretch beyond society's or humanity's meaning.

Consequently the mysticism of Mr. Mason's humanism is inadequate. It does not explain. It does not by any means include all the facts or, rather, all the humanity of a human being. Only the existence of a *Thou* rather than an *It*, in what I propose to call the universe, can include that.

As far as I understand the human situation, man cannot escape from mysticism, that is, from an awareness of being that reaches beyond rational understanding. I am not by this suggestion demoting rational understanding. Let it be used with all the rigour of ideas held for the integrity of the ideas themselves, but to assume that, when a conclusion has been reached in this manner by reason—whatever that may mean—that is all that can be said, is to deny the whole weight of human experience. Sooner or later a man has to deal with something beyond his own humanity and consequently that of other people's, no matter how many or wherever they may be. This, in fact, is what humanity demands of him. That I am not alone, that I am not a mere self, a total explanation of all that is, is what my self bears upon me. Admit the existence of a man, then the

existence of something other than himself is admitted also. Humanism is only a half-way house to admitting this. There is, it affirms, something more, but that can only be found in a generalised humanity, or more correctly in a mystical humanity that can be loved.

Human experience reaches beyond this. Its reach is one of the concerns of the human spirit. I am content to say that there is a reality to be known, loved and revered, beyond the confines of humanity for humanity's sake.

Mr. Mason, in what appears to be his conception of Theism, has got bogged down in theological notions that are not in the least necessary to religious apprehension. The scientists he says (all kinds of them), no longer find the "hypothesis of God" necessary for their various branches of science. What is there startling or new in that? Why on earth should a scientist, *qua* scientist, want a hypothesis of God" to make his practical science work? That problem was surely settled by Huxley and Co. long ago. Mr. Mason hasn't got out of his system the notion of God as a creator, borrowed from the first chapters of *Genesis*. A scientifically spaceless and timeless universe can as surely hold God Almighty, as a universe conceived at a given moment of time and created in a notion of space. The killing of the ancient version of *Genesis* in which the nature of God is conceived of as time-, and space-creating has surely already been done, and to assume that this is the only understanding of the nature of God that is possible is to assume that Christian theology is permanently fundamentalist. It is not. And to hold a mystical humanism over against a dead-and-done-with fundamentalism as the only way out for the religious man is utterly to mistake what is actually taking place. Against the development possible within the depths of Christianity Mr. Mason's mysticism is a blind alley.

The way out for Unitarianism is surely not to fall into the spiritual calamity of mistaking a relative God of culture—which a creator God can be—as the absolute God, and then, after slaying it, invent something equally relative, but probably more distorted, to take its place. Indeed, the relative God, the creator, stood for something; he still does; and he cannot be so easily dismissed as an hypothesis without dismissing all the concretion of human experience that went to his understanding—and that is a serious matter for a humanist to do. The relative in religion always points to the absolute, and it is better to perceive the manner of the pointing than to kill the thing out of hand just because it is not, owing to changing human thought, exactly what it declares itself to be. Indeed, if cultures are all that exist, each one of them is doomed to fade away. Mr. Mason is all the time forced to speak of relatives in this connection—relatives connected with nothing at all save themselves, and that is not very satisfying and is justifiably suspect. To invent a mythical ideal future culture in which all these relatives will be resolved is, perhaps, a necessary exercise to save such a

situation; but it is not realism, it is not even mysticism, it is utopianism—an act of fancy mistaken for an act of creation.

Better by far to try and live within the Christian tradition with minds open to what it says and what it omits to say than create a mysticism which the desolation of our contemporary world, with its nationalism, racial mystiques, and "love of the brethren", proves to be an altogether second-rate affair.

II—A Question of History

H. LISMER SHORT*

I warmly sympathise with Mr. Mason's desire for a reconsideration of belief, to build a faith which shall be adequate for the modern world; and I agree that pragmatic idealism, or "humanism," has become an essential part of our way of thinking, and must find a place in modern religion. But I think that he should take care not to ignore other essential elements of thought.

His argument, as I understand it, is that growth in technology, accompanied by a decline in supernatural religion, leads to a golden age of humanist, this-worldly culture. He cites three such ages: Periclean Athens, the Italian Renaissance, and the present day. But they do not in fact support his argument.

He quotes Protagoras as typical of Greek thought, and says that his dictum, "Man is the measure of all things", is the initial text of humanism. He adds that "Protagoras especially argued that, since the dominant interest was in Man, it could be argued that there was nothing higher than Man". This is Mr. Mason's own interpretation; only three sentences of Protagoras have survived, and he was understood by his contemporaries merely to assert that no exact knowledge is possible, so one man's opinion is as good as another's. "Man" does not mean "mankind," but "any man." The Sophists, of whom Protagoras was a leader, were among the shallowest of Greek thinkers; and so far from supporting democracy, as Mr. Mason appears to think, they caused its first downfall. Their disciples included Critias, head of the Thirty Tyrants (whose views on supernatural religion were not unlike Mr. Mason's), and Alcibiades, the traitor. Mr. Mason protests that humanism does not lead to tyranny, but the Athenian precedents are against him.

But is Protagoras typical of Greek thought? Are not Plato, Aristotle and the early Stoics equally typical, and much more important for the later development of mankind? They came out of the same technological age, but were not sceptics and anti-theists.

He similarly links Renaissance humanism to technological change, though I find it hard to connect "the growth of deep-sea navigation, mining and metallurgy" with the Italian Renaissance.

* Personal note on page 136

His target is too vague and large; almost everything between 1200 and 1700 is brought in to show that men were turning from the supernatural to the human. He even includes "the beginning of the manufacture of alcohol"; does he mean the distilling of brandy, and if so how did this affect Michelangelo and the rest? I think he has forgotten that the typical philosophy of the Renaissance was neo-platonism, which was not humanist. He never mentions the Reformation, which belongs to the same age. If the men of that day wished to indicate their exclusive interest in humanity, they chose strange ways of showing it.

But has he not fallen into a semantic error? "Humanism," in relation to ancient Greece and Renaissance Italy, does not refer to humanity but to "the humanities," i.e. *literae humaniores* as distinct from the Bible.

Turning to humanism as philosophy, Mr. Mason seems to me again to aim at a vague target. He quotes Protagoras, Socrates ("know thyself") and Descartes ("I think, therefore I am") to support the assertion that "the external world is known and shaped only through the activity of an ordering human mind" and that "the only reality we know is a human artifact." But "know thyself" is usually ascribed to Thales, who was not a humanist; and Descartes used his dictum to prove the existence of God and the external world. Does Mr. Mason really believe that the world has no characteristics apart from our knowledge of it? Why should a humanist "reverence" a subjective world, created out of "accepted parental patterns"? Mr. Mason cannot have it both ways; if "reality is human," its substructure either non-existing or unknowable, it cannot also be a mystic trinity of Void, Man and Process. But I think that Mr. Mason, like the Sophists, is using philosophy only to discredit philosophy; Plato noted that Protagoras had two different teachings for different occasions.

Similarly pragmatic idealism is one element in modern thought, and its voice must be heard in the making of modern theology. But it is by no means the only element; indeed, in relation to existentialism, logical positivism and Christian realism, it is beginning to look a little old-fashioned.

III—A Question of Myth

NAPOLEON W. LOVELY*

SINCE "all men are taxpayers as well as immortal souls" each man is at times a maker of measurements and at times a maker of myths. And every human choice or decision is made in the light of both measurements (I calculate, I reckon, I figure) and myths (I believe, I imagine, I value). At times a man will pursue

* Personal note on page 144

his daily routine according to the flexible and comfortable rhythms of prose. At times he will rise on wings of poetry and behold his life and his universe as radiant images of his deepest longings. At times a man will appear who can winnow a mass of measurements and a host of dreams to discover among them materials for the making of new and nobler myths, to be expressed in his works or his words. These myths, which are relevant commentaries upon the meanings of his prose as well as his poetry, will be of such a nature that the world will treasure them, nor willingly let them die.

The preservation and elaboration of these relevant myths is the work of religion, and a religion lives or dies, grows or shrinks, to the degree that it maintains the relevance and the range which the experience of people (their measurements, their visions and their achievements) requires of their myth. The one thing which a people will demand of their religion is an imaginative interpretation which goes beyond, although not against, the prosaic and practical conclusions based upon finite measurements. Religion, to be vital, must speak of more things in heaven and earth than philosophers, *as philosophers*, have dreamed of analysing in terms of logic, or scientists, *as scientists*, have dreamed of measuring in terms of observable data.

Furthermore, just as in science no hypothesis is surrendered until a better one is found, so in religion no myth is surrendered until there appears a new myth greater in relevance *and in range*. This is the point which the apostles of naturalistic humanism too often forget. They are right when they say that the world will not seriously attempt to live by a religion which sacrifices relevance for the sake of imaginative and poetic range. When religion degenerates into fantasy it becomes a toy for idle hours rather than a guide for effective labors. But they are wrong when they proceed on the assumption that men will accept a religion which restricts its imaginative and poetic range to the limits of finite measurement and purely human relevance. For the myths by which men live are treasured not only, not even primarily, as a means of mastering the environment, but rather as a way of transcending the *measurable* significance of human experience.

Myths, more often than not, are an embarrassment to the taxpayer but he clings to them, maintains them, and affirms them because they speak to him of that in him which transcends the taxpayer. They speak of that in him which is divine, creative, imaginative, and beyond the reach of temporal power.

In the light of this it is instructive to study the myth offered us by Leonard Mason. (This vol. pp. 73 ff.):

"In traditional religion one fundamental experience which has been invested with great value is the sense of man's creaturely dependence for everything on the infinite God. Under Humanism, this is translated into the individual man's awareness of his dependence upon Man the Collective."

For many of us this says at once too much and too little. "Man the Collective" is a phrase and a concept quite foreign to anything we see, feel, or experience. It seems, for lack of relevance to the prosaic and measurable aspects of our lives, to begin and end in the realm of fantasy. It is the universal experience of men that each is dependent upon *a* human collective or *a* social group. His physical needs, his values, his manners, his ways of thinking are all impossible apart from a socio-cultural complex of which he is a member. But there never has been a socio-cultural group which in fact embraced all men. In fact men find themselves dependent upon a family, a tribe, a nation, an "international." Their personalities are in part defined and developed by the "collectives" in which they are born and educated. They end up as "Joneses," as "Apaches," as "Frenchmen," as "Europeans," as "Mohammedans." It is only as they transcend the collectives which make them and shape them that they achieve a sense of Universal Humanity and experience a genuine sense of Universal Human Brotherhood. It is, furthermore, only as individuals that they transcend the limits imposed by the collectives. The collective is always at war with the Universal as well as with the individual. To invoke "Man the Collective" as a substitute for God the Universal as the object of our creaturely dependence is to *invite* us to depend upon a particular, finite human collectivity which is less than Universal Humanity or to *imply* that there is a Universal Human Collective upon which we can depend for our creation, preservation, education, and integration. To accept the invitation would be to settle for too little; to accept the implication would be to affirm much more than experience warrants and, indeed, much which observable data indicate is false.

All this may be a quibble. But it is not a quibble when men affirm that for their creation and preservation they are dependent upon energies and processes which "Man the Collective," even in his ideal form as "Universal Humanity,"* does not now control nor has in the past controlled. Man may in the future achieve sovereignty over all Being and all Becoming, all Reality and all Process. But even that achievement will be dependent upon the *previous* creation, evolution, and education of humanity by forces which are other than human, and by energies which are patterned through processes beyond present human knowledge and human control.

It is an evident and observable fact that for what we are and for what we need to maintain ourselves, as physical or spiritual entities, our dependence cannot be upon Mankind alone, even though Mankind achieve the highest possible knowledge, and understanding, and universality. And a myth which speaks to our dependence

*It has always intrigued my interest to note how insistent the naturalistic humanists are in their attempt to set up an object of worship so much more thoroughly anthropomorphic than anything found in the Greek and Hebrew pantheons.

must have a range and a relevance which vastly transcends any myth of Man the Collective.

Mr. Mason writes further:

"A second religious value is the sense that man is cradled in an infinite providence. 'Underneath are the everlasting arms'. Humanists change the metaphor but retain the experience upon which the value is based. Man is a linked being, his ancestry goes back without break or division to the genesis of the earth itself; the earth is linked to the solar system . . . and all are linked with the sweep of matter from remotest time and farthest space. His future stretches as far as thought can reach, and in that imaginative leap there arises that vision of man, by cunning, defeating and outwitting the collapse of the very earth which brought him forth. A humanist has faith in the unlimited possibility of human experience and achievement."

This paragraph gives us a new metaphor, a new myth by which to allay the anxiety which accompanies that sense of dependence which is discussed above. Surprisingly, this new myth has a range and relevance sufficient to deal with an anxiety more far-reaching and pervasive than any which might stem from a sense of dependence upon Man the Collective. This myth binds us securely not only to the complex net of human life and history, it links us firmly and intricately to a pattern of physical reality which extends from the beginning of time to the ending thereof, and includes, in one vast pattern, galactic evolutions and processes of interstellar space. We find ourselves supported by an intricate web which binds us to all reality, past, present, or to come. We are assured that until that vast pattern fails and falls into the void we shall be borne by it above the emptiness of non-being. For we "are linked with the sweep of matter from remotest time and farthest space." The new metaphor seems to speak of a dependence upon realities which far transcend a dependence on "Man the Collective."

It is, however, in this paragraph that Mr. Mason begs the question. In a preceding paragraph he has said that the individual's awareness of his dependence upon Man the Collective refers "to the long slow history of his race and species." But now "this long, slow history" goes back "without break or division . . . (to) the sweep of matter from remotest time and farthest space" and it looks to a future "as far as thought can reach." Man the Collective becomes an "unlimited possibility." Clearly we are dealing here with the Infinite and reference to Humanity is reference to the Incommensurable and, therefore, the ultimately Ineffable.

To give our myth its necessary range we have evoked a concept which is beyond the weighing and measuring of man the maker of measurements. We have turned, as the myth-makers always do, to the transcendent and poetic. If this "agency on which to rely" is not supernatural then "nature" itself must include the immeasurable. And an immeasurable nature is not the nature with

which science concerns itself. Hence, "naturalistic" Humanism must concern itself with the transcendent and poetic as well as the measurable and prosaic.

For this reason I believe the Humanist will find that his morality, like other moralities, will "require a powerful and penetrating cultus and ritual, a sacred dramatisation, to make its goals (which are in great part the moral goals of most "universal" religions) plausible and effective."*

This essay is not intended to deny the pressing need for a new myth. Nor is it to question the fact that science and history have revealed to us a world which makes old myths inadequate in both relevance and range. It is to express a conviction that people will not let the old myths go until they are confronted with new and better ones.

On page 85 Mr. Mason comes back to something very close to one of Christianity's great religious insights. Speaking of petitionary prayer, mystical unification with God, and salvation by an ingression of divine grace he says: "Let them go. . . . But substitutes will need to be found if humanism is to become a religion and not simply a culture or an intellectual search. They cannot be found in a day. *Perhaps they have to find us. . . . They cannot be imposed. . . . They must grow out of the human situation, out of the newer enigmas of the mind, out of the tension between hope and frustration.*"†

I think I find here a hint of something very close to an "ingression of divine grace," a dependence upon something more than human efforts and human powers, a humility, a confessed need, a patient and urgent expectation which characteristically heralds, in the religious life, the new intuitions which are revelations, the insights which are validated by universal human experience when shown forth in individual human lives.

The great myth-makers, remembering this experience and these lives, condense the insights into cultus, they reduce (or enlarge) the lives into sacred dramas, and they communicate the moral and meaning of events (their relevance to daily experience and their dependence upon a transcendent range of infinite Becoming) through those patterns of symbolic behaviour which we call rituals. It is the witness of history that our morals will never be consistently more noble than our myths; as it is the witness of experience that measurements must always be made in terms of concepts which ultimately transcend any actual measurements. Hence it is Man's glory that he is aware of a Glory which transcends man; it is Man's greatness that, knowing his dependence upon the Infinite, he accepts the responsibility for ordering his own life and choosing his own destiny, confidently expecting that the Infinite shall ultimately justify Man's courage by showing itself in harmony with our deepest desires and loftiest aspirations.

* The parentheses are mine.

† The italics are mine

The Necessity of Disciplined Thought in the Building of Free Institutions

CHARLES W. PHILLIPS

IT is a commonplace of these times that we are living during a wave of anti-intellectualism. It is by no means directed solely against political "eggheads." As a disparagement of Reason itself, however, it has wide and impressive support in intellectual circles themselves. Contemporary sophistication is a devotion to, or a cult of, "the reason of unreason." This well-known phrase from *Don Quixote* is not taken to be "quixotic" but somehow profound. It would seem that "Reason," as disciplined thought, must either be redefined or recovered, or both.

The same necessity, in a somewhat different way obtains with "Freedom." Here the word is in such excellent repute that it is used to justify all sorts of mutually contradictory programs.

We must establish what we mean by Freedom, and also, from the definition, the theoretical necessity of disciplined thought or reason for it. For one thing, any practical structuring of a form or method in a "free" institution will derive its justification from whatever intrinsic relation, if any, reason has to freedom. Secondly, the examination is necessary because much of the force of the current cult of unreason comes from its being a protest made in the name of freedom. This situation cannot be ignored.

The aim in this paper is threefold:

- (1) To establish the terms in which Reason and Freedom are intimately related.
- (2) To enumerate some of the principles of discipline, or conditions which dignify thought with genuine rationality or reasonableness.
- (3) To take the "free institution" of a Church, and specify the ends and some of the means which must apply in the four main realms of its life: preaching, worship, education, and government—if it is to be a really "free" institution.

FREEDOM—A COMMITMENT TO A RATIONAL ORDER

What is freedom? From the stridency of tone in which the word is often uttered, and the sound of the ensuing battle, one gets the impression of confusion. The most obvious notions one gets are that "freedom" is a highly individual affair, and that one man's freedom is another's tyranny. First we would abstract from any particular program or system being touted in the name of freedom, and begin with the way the sense of "freedom" comes to us in naive experience. It would seem that the awareness, the "feel" of it, consists in two things:

- (a) The awareness of the necessity to make a choice or decision. The choice may be either between two or more alternatives of action or between acceptance or rejection of a psychological order one can do nothing about. When Margaret Fuller said she had "accepted the universe" she made a decision of great importance to her "freedom" which a lot of people who think her silly have not made themselves. Had she not chosen, or if we do not choose to accept some particular inevitability, from earthquake to atom bomb, there is a feeling of undue constraint or of being "unfree." The essence of the choice one feels in awareness of freedom is a *choice of relationship*, of acceptance or rejection, of positive or negative *commitment*, to an order of events.
- (b) One is also aware of freedom acutely in one's *capacity* to make any choice. Confusion to the point of inability to make a choice is a bondage, but does not obliterate "freedom" as the sense of a necessity to choose. A self unable to make a choice and unaware that to make none is a decision to drift, is in a pathological condition and the matter of freedom does not arise. Such a person is "unfree," but this is a special use of the word and really denotes a sub-human condition.

Freedom, initially, is a feeling of indeterminacy, yet an indeterminacy constantly seeking resolution. To put it another way, it is the awareness of the self in constantly making itself; the awareness of the "I" constantly choosing what shall constitute its "Me." It is the activity of taking the world into one's self.

It constantly points to the acceptance of some constraint. Whatever alternative of relationship or pattern of action is chosen, changes the pattern and conditions of events. It places one in a new situation. It literally makes a different world. Even prior to that, however, the appeal to some sort of standard by the light of which a new pattern is chosen, is an appeal to some constraint—some law or order.

Freedom, as a feeling, is the sense of the movement of the self by means of a constant series of decisions, towards a greater self-realization. It is fully actualized only in the choice of ends or values as concretely embodied in some plan of action. Since, by self-realization, we intend a more complex harmony, more power, more adequacy, and above all a more lively consciousness of the world, the valuation of any proximate end we may be choosing will ultimately be justified by appeal to Truth, or Goodness, or Beauty—the largest abstraction of value meaningful to us.

The most important base-line to establish is that freedom is not an end in itself. As a condition of being-in-a-state-of-becoming, it is a thrust toward ideal values. The freedom from some constraint or limitation of self is meaningless apart from the sense of freedom toward the constraint of a larger, more ideal self.

It is the freedom *to*, or *for*, which is by far the most important

part. In a sense, the problem of freedom is not so much in not having it, as in knowing what to do with it. There are many constraints not freely chosen, constraints upon our liberty of action in carrying out a choice. Such often may be real concerns. To some degree they may be resisted by internal psychological revolution, until the day of more external correction. There is truth as well as poetry in the insistence that "stone walls do not a prison make, nor iron bars a cage." But even if one is not in chains there is a more difficult and subtle aspect to freedom, which is to know what one wants, and to be satisfied with it if one gets it. The problem of our times, is not so much tyranny, as a secret liking for it which avoids the awful necessity of choice. This is the turning of freedom against itself.

Is there any hope of arriving at some full actualisation of freedom in self-fulfillment? Experience never finds it. The True, upon behalf of which we may choose, is always admixed with the false; the Good with the bad. The choice we make may not turn altogether to ashes in our mouths, but outlives whatever partial capacity it had for satisfaction and usefulness. Thus freedom is a frustrating thing, and there is considerable reason why many seek to "escape from Freedom." There is in fact so much reason for this that it is almost incredible that liberals have failed to recognize this thrust and, instead, have assumed that "freedom" was itself the end for which all mankind was waiting. Rather, we have "freedom"—as Elmer Davis put it "we are born free." We don't know what to do with it. Since all choice is plagued with finitude and ambiguity the liberal must justify choice and demonstrate satisfaction. It does not do enough good to say that turning freedom against itself is a perversion of nature and leads ultimately to dehumanization and evil. It does of course, but that makes the chief use of the word "freedom" a slogan for crisis, instead of a means to avoid them. This is a perennial liberal predicament.

How does one overcome the tragedies of finitude sufficiently to make freedom constantly attractive? Existentialist thinking, from which circles come most of the devotees of unreason, suggest two ways. Liberalism has rested primarily in two:

- (1) To some existentialists there is no answer. Sartre, for example, has reasoned every reason out of existence. It remains only for the individual to act, and to be the sum total of acts which are rationally groundless. He must act as if he were God, but he remains painfully and excruciatingly himself. He can establish no connections of satisfaction. "Hell is other people," and the last line of the play which could not distinguish hell from earth, was simply, "lets get on with it." Such nihilism may not appear worthy to be called an answer. Sartre however is acutely aware of the radical character of freedom in making the world for the self, even though that world is a radically subjective one and not very nice.

- (2) Those existentialists who are more religiously oriented find that freedom spent upon behalf of any constraint in time or history is tragic and self-defeating. Freedom, they say, can, however, make a decision for an unconditional realm beyond time and history. As Niebuhr puts it, it is a commitment to a "divine source and end of all things (which) is a mystery beyond every rational intelligibility, though it is the capstone of every system of meaning." How that which is beyond all intelligibility can be a capstone of all meaning, may not be quite clear. Certainly for him the world never arrives anywhere but in paradoxes and contradictions. It may be that we do not want to stop short of ultimate reality, whatever that may be, but certainly we do not want to stop at just naming it. If we get no further than that, then as long as we live and move and have a good bit of our being on this side of it, we shall want to find the right sins to commit, and commit them.

Valuable as this point of view may possibly be, as a criticism of reason over-reaching itself, and esthetically stimulating as it may often be in posing dramatic contrasts, this viewpoint merely names a constructive intent rather than demonstrates one.

- (3) In Mysticism, freedom is somewhat redeemed, for it is claimed to be possible to experience both the "thatness" of a unifying whole in which the self is taken up, and something of the "whatness." The experience of mystics however, is so ineffable that it can scarcely be articulated, nor have they been very good in telling us how to have it. As an appeal to experience it provides data for reasoning. Its weakness is its relative inaccessibility except on the lower levels of sensing, what E. S. Ames called, the "mystical quality" in all things. In esthetic appreciations, liberals have often made this appeal, but it is hardly a self-sufficient one.
- (4) A final alternative is to assume that the world which Reason makes, if not *the* real world, must bear some analogy to its Truth or Reality; otherwise words have no meaning, and thought is the most sterile of disciplines. The continual experience of the condition of freedom as a necessity of choice argues against anything more than analogical validity of its end. Anything less than that, not only deprives words of meaning, it makes unintelligible the very thrust to choice. This reasonable assumption is the one we feel liberalism must make.

What, however, of the acknowledged finitude and ambiguity of all choices? The Existentialist analysis of the human situation and the limitations of reason may be acute as long as the limitations remain just that, and are not converted into disability or meaninglessness. Short of one's knowing "that principle of comprehension which is beyond all comprehension,"—and Mr. Niebuhr is not prideful enough to claim that—reason still remains the only way to discriminate between superstition and partial truth, or between

“myths,” or between the competing irrationalisms in the daily provisional commitments we have to make. To convert partial truth into total falsehood may be designed to show how rigorously critical one is. It may also betray an anguished perfectionism foredoomed to frustration and impotency, and which, in the name of humility, may submit to humiliation.

The inevitable experience of finitude, that is, of a self never fully realized, sensitive to the fact that the world it is making is never for it the “real” or “true” world, must be accompanied by the satisfaction of having overcome a previous finitude. Herbert Muller has well suggested that the “tragic sense of life”, which is acutely felt in the experience of freedom, need not be interpreted only in the “melancholy sense of helping to prepare for the worst.” This is the general use of it. It may be a positive inspiration. If all the great societies and their peoples have died, none is really dead. They have enriched a tradition of great enduring values. To imply that all finitudes are equal, that all movement, as in Zeno’s paradox, never gets to its goal and that “a miss is as good as a mile,” is true only in terms of a narrow and abstract rationalism to which Reason is not confined. The qualitative richness of a larger context of experience, though still unfulfilled, has greater satisfactions than a lesser one. Berdyaev at least extracted from history the value of “the triumph of memory over the spirit of corruption.” Further, as personal experience is prolonged by history, such things as Wisdom and Stability are achievable.

One may know Wisdom as a fruit of Reason, upon the basis of which one chooses better than if one had followed the raw empiricism of trial and error by impulse. The frustrations of such choice are less onerous than what results from the refusal of all options in accepting the illusory comfort of an authoritarianism of either Church or State.

One may realise Stability also in finding that the inscrutable waters of “Reality” do support. Man may only sense the shadows on the wall of his earthly cave. Or lacking Plato’s analogy, he may have the experience of John Dewey and learn that he can “lean back on the universe.” In any case, men who have heard of neither philosopher, and who, steadfast in following the best lights of reason they possess, have had that experience and that satisfaction. Wisdom may make such a man sadder, but not necessarily unhappy and, certainly not melancholic. The sadness is of the sort coming from a deep knowledge that we are never what we might be, that we can not do what we might do, or wants to do, either for ourselves or for others. Our happiness comes from doing something and in always doing more. Our satisfaction is fellowship and our *élan* is courage. We can laugh as much as anyone else, but we laugh with people, not at them. This is better too, than those who can do neither, but who would mask the guilt of revulsion from humanity, self included, with a hyper-tense piety.

The locus of ultimate freedom, a full realization of it is, as Whitehead suggests, beyond circumstance. Yet the experience of all circumstance contains within itself a thrust and a pointer to such a locus. This may be what Whitehead further calls the direct intuition that life may be grounded in its absorption in what is changeless amid change. Such is the Truth to which freedom is a compulsion. It never fully arrives. The finite truths however, may be informed by that whole of which they speak and to some degree authentically reflect, if they do not fully encompass it.

To deny such a participative relation, and to put the locus of ultimate freedom not only beyond given circumstances but altogether beyond history, which Whitehead does not, but Niebuhr does, may give a sense of ultimate optimism to some. Proximately however it can do no more than bulwark an other-worldly fundamentalism, whenever it becomes concrete. That is, sins which are real become unmitigated and unmitigatable evil; finitude which is inescapable becomes a cursing of the day wherein one was born; and the tragic sense, which is an unavoidable minor key in living becomes the only one, and can only play the funeral dirge of disaster.

Awareness of transcendence in history, dignifies Reason, without yet making it perfect, and makes possible the proximate optimism, not of the Kingdom of God, or Utopia, or any "brave new world" but of the realization of purposes, of happiness, and the satisfaction of the reverence for life, first for one's own sake, and by empathy for the life of others.

How one articulates it, however, is not as important as having the experience. To experience freedom to this end, is a primary religious experience. With it one has a wide latitude of words. Without it none will do. It will make no difference if one is a humanist with a prudent agnosticism about God (which he must have unless he has elicited from experience the theistic intuition, the only way to have a God) or if he names a supreme being behind all becoming. With this experience of freedom, the humanist is not stuck with the so-called "unutterable sadness of atheistic loneliness." He has a durability of meaning in human history which humans find, sustain, and may add to. The durability is real, even if inexplicable in origin. This is the satisfaction by means of which life triumphs over disasters. The theist, on the other hand, must find the white radiance of eternity and the "bliss" of divine companionship stained, if not shattered, by the "sufferings of God," who must surely suffer, if he participates in becoming, in history, and therefore in the exigencies of evil.

Reverence for the positive satisfactions of life in the midst of the enormous welter of human desire and conflict, should make the humanist refrain from atheistic dogmatism. The theist should realize that the mystical quality of all experience eludes all words, however necessary they may be as pointers. This will check him in glib use of all words and especially the word "God."

THE DISCIPLINES OF REASON

Freedom is the awareness of the self creating itself. If it begins in an awareness of what constrains movement at all in this direction, it must be fulfilled by a choice upon behalf of a more ample order, but still an order. Ultimately it is a compulsion to Truth, an ideal order, forever open-ended, but ever leaving a residue of memories which triumph over the spirit of corruption, and a zest for the adventure to enrich their store. Reason, or disciplined thought, is the best and primary means of discriminating the proximate orders which the ideal may take and which carry the self along in its creative process of fulfillment.

It is particularly in the practical sphere that Reason is badgered. It is the age-old and false disjunction of Reason and Emotion which still confuses. Reason is supposed to be "cold"—and wet too, apparently, since it is supposed to dampen the ardor of feeling and passion. Since these are much a part of life, romantics and liberals alike have protested on their behalf. It never was necessary and certainly is not now, to use phrases like "cold reason" and "hot fit of inspiration" as if, as Jacques Barzun has said, the categories of the plumber are fit for psychology.

One still meets with Pascal's "the heart has its reasons which reason knows not of" as a touchstone of all those who need a sanction for some non-conformity, or for some leap to action or dogma. It is usually invoked to justify the belief that it is sometimes good to do what judgment disapproves. Pascal, however, is less well known than he should be for the further statement: "The whole duty of man is to think well." He figuratively enlarged the context of Reason. He did not set up any counter-principle for organizing life.

The emotions and basic drives have seemed to be prior to Reason and to father its thoughts, hence the summary dismissal of thought as rationalization. This however is nothing more than the organism's effort to find its intrinsic ordering for its situation at the moment. There are many and conflicting rationalizations fathered. Not only do we want many things, but some we want under certain conditions which we would reject under others. Merely to list our fundamental drives or let them fight it out among themselves does not tell us what we want. "Until," says Arthur Murphy, "we know on what terms our several interests can be jointly satisfied, and to what the satisfaction of any one of them would commit us in relation to the others and the condition of their satisfaction, we simply do not know what we want." Short of a special revelation, we have to consider under what conditions action can be carried on which harmonizes our impulses. Murphy continues: "This possibility of satisfaction will stand, related to competing present urges, as an ideal—something not now actual but attainable and worth attaining; and it will have reasonable authority over them simply in so far as it expresses what is wanted,

not blindly, or at random, but with a knowledge of the conditions under which a secure and comprehensive satisfaction can actually be achieved."

Reason is the process of figuring out the terms of this ideal, of giving concrete content to this value, which, it must be emphasized, *is not less an interest now*, than any of those which make it up, and hence that which also arouses feeling and emotion.

There is nothing obscure about how our goals or values are made. A free decision is not uncaused, but it is not completely determined apart from the contribution which the self rationally makes to its determination. If one's instincts or impulses are the sole determinants after a war for dominance, then man would not be free, and it is difficult to see how he could even feel free. Or if grace alone, consciously or unconsciously, can inform his decisions with social worth, there is no sense in imputing freedom to him. Only a rational self *can* be free. Reason does not always choose well, and never perfectly, but it works well enough to vindicate the feeling of freedom, to effect genuine satisfactions, and to permit intuition of support in the nature of things for the choices so made. No more need be claimed for it. Nothing less is enough. Neither psychological nor theological determinism will do as much, and there is nothing to commend what we understand to be blind, arbitrary, or capricious.

Some of the requirements of Reason have been implied: comprehensiveness of interest, harmonization of conflicting claims, and the finding of a valid standard. We will be both more specific and extensive with some disciplines or requirements of an effective practical use of Reason. In this we shall be particularly indebted to Arthur Murphy.

- (1) The first discipline of thought is to get reliable information concerning relevant matters of fact. This is more difficult in dealing with human hopes and desires than it is in physical science. Yet we want to know what probably will happen if one, rather than another course of action, is chosen. It is necessary to get as complete information as possible about the assertions of fact and the reasons for supposing them to be true. It is necessary to be as rigorous as possible before choosing or accepting the responsibility of no choice. Thus to lower the degree of blindness is most necessary. We do the cause of Reason no service however, if we narrow it, as some do, to "scientific method," implying thereby that its facts may be measured as precisely or as fully acquired. Human relations are infinitely more complex than physics. There is no way of getting all of the data, or of running controlled experiments on others. One has further to deal with facts of esthetic preference, and with moral codes, as well as with judgments about the comparative intelligence of races, where science may contribute a scientific truth. We say this not to make any excuse for any

failure to exhaust all methods of inquiry. It is only to emphasize the complexity and fallibility of the process compared to the relative simplicities of the sciences.

- (2) The second discipline is to get those facts which are relevant to decision. The decision must be with respect to a plan of action with a future reference. The situations are all too painfully familiar of those who would discuss a matter to death or investigate *ad infinitum* but never put anything together. Reason should be trying to bring something into being not now existent. It is trying to achieve an ideal. So we want to know what will or probably will happen, or might happen, if one or another alternative of action is chosen. By virtue of what G. H. Mead used to term "the temporal dimension of the nervous system" we are capable of projecting possible actions and results, and testing them in thought. There is no alternative for free action as to whether it shall or shall not have a plan, but only which one. It should be the one which is best calculated to work, as the ratio applied appears to articulate all of the desires and allow them proper room. Imagination and insight have full play here, but some sort of demonstration in thought must finally be made, as to what will happen if committed to action. Not all contingencies can be foreseen in this temporal dimension of the nervous system which allows us to make projections. Going through this process however makes a difference. Here is a large and ample role for reason. Again, it should be noted however, that strictly speaking, this is *not* carrying out a scientific experiment. The real test, after commitment to action, is not, in the nature of the case, the kind one can conduct in advance. Here again, it is no service to the cause of Reason, if it is reduced to "scientific method."
- (3) The third discipline of Reason is to direct it to attainable goods. They are none the less ideal because they are as yet unattained. It should be demonstrated however, that they are attainable by the means proposed. An unattainable ideal is not a good enough ideal. Ideals are not those things which are irrelevant, or unattainable, or so vague one can't tell which. From "Peace" to "Justice" and from "Love" to "Righteousness" it is necessary to define concretely the condition one wants, and show how, though presently it does not yet obtain, one can get to it from where one is. Otherwise, in the name of social action, one may be carrying on an unrequited love affair with the universe.
- (4) The fourth discipline is that Reason must be co-operative. That is, it must be able to communicate itself as reasonable, and enlist the support of others. True, some individual may have to initiate the plan for action, but unless it is capable of enlisting the support and the loyalty of others, they cannot believe in it. It is irrational to them. The blueprint of the social engineer

then must be *more* than an ordinary scientific hypothesis, and be more than internally consistent and coherent by the ordinary standards of intelligibility—even though it should be this as a minimum. It must also inform, clarify, and direct to a reasonable conclusion the activities of groups. It must define a general social ideal. It is easy to sneer at that which moves groups as “myth” or “ideology.” Nevertheless that which is purely private is esoteric. What is understandable to only a few people, however right it may be, will not move many and will come to disaster or perversion if prematurely executed.

- (5) The fifth discipline demands that the ends proposed have some conformity to the rules of public morality of the community in which they are proposed. These will vary from community to community. There is no community without such rules or general principles. If action proposed cannot stand inspection by such, or is unacceptable to such, it can be sustained only by force or fraud. Such may be and is done, but it is hardly a way to develop freedom, rationality, or creativity in men.
- (6) The sixth discipline is that policy proposed should be “liberal.” This is a matter of the way ideas are to be used. Initially the content of social ideas develops from the customs and traditions of the communities in which they exist. They should be used, however, not narrowly to exclude from the rational and permissible everything not included in its initial terms, but rather to widen the area of effective communication and shared experience. Thus, ideas may be capable of taking into themselves new elements of knowledge, become more inclusive, more wise, as well as more humane. Nothing is more commonplace than that ideas of right and justice vary in different communities, and to lesser degree, but still with tension, in the same one. If absolutism for any ideal is not demanded, a rational policy obtaining the consent of the whole, or most of it, may be achieved. Such achievement requires those political institutions in which consent can be freely given and made operative in making policy. The basic content of liberalism here is not “free trade,” or “free labor,” or “free competition” or any other specific program, although such at times may serve a purpose. The primary content is rather a condition in which minds have no external constraint upon the natural freedom they possess, and which permits them to explore the possibilities of co-operative action and to act as their judgment and choice dictates.

Within these disciplines thought may be practical, efficient, and yield satisfaction. There is no way of eliminating completely prejudice, ignorance, error, or to have foresight of all contingencies. Nothing infallible, absolute, or excessively rigid is demanded or claimed. There is plenty of room for, even the necessity for, faith, in the sense of trust, or belief built upon probability. There is no room for it in the sense of “believing what you know ain’t true.”

When the fallibilities and errors are discovered, it is a more inclusive reason which does it. Reason is no perfect instrument upon which to proceed. To anxious temperaments, it may not appear at times very good at all. Measured against its alternatives however, it is the best there is.

DISCIPLINED THOUGHT IN A FREE CHURCH

We would make final illustrations in terms of that "free" institution which is a liberal church, and claim that the above philosophy and process is essential to its maintenance, preservation, and growth.

Any free institution must, by definition, serve the individuals in it. It must serve the drive and potentiality in each, to grow, to make out of the necessity to choose, a richer, more harmonious self. Any such institution however, even the institution of a free church is, as "institution," more than an association of individuals. It is, or must become, a "community." That is, it is a whole greater than the sum of its parts. It is an organism which can do more for the individuals than any one of them can do for themselves. One belongs to it, more than it belongs to them. True, one may secede from a "free" church if it does not, or if one believes it does not, serve the purpose of enlarging the orbit of freedom and growth of self. While one is a member however, one must be wholly a member. One cannot have one foot in and one foot out. The commitment of his personal interest is a commitment to a context which includes interests beyond the narrowly personal in all rational policies. Many people come to free churches, or are attracted to them, in large part because of the refuge or asylum it offers to their peculiarities or, it may be to their neuroses. This is a fine signature of the liberalism and humanity of the institution and its impulse to inclusiveness. Such individuals will not stay long however, nor will they be well served in the interests of their freedom, if their raw individualism does not find a way to contribute to, or be enriched by, others. They must come to realize a commitment to an order which makes that possible.

A free church may have no dogmas, but it must define a structure and elaborate the terms in which free individuals may develop. Is this a kind of dogma? In a sense it is and in that sense it should be admitted frankly. It is a rational one however and in those terms has a principle of self-correction. It is one which is aware of the fact that it cannot confer freedom on anyone or, more especially, since freedom is a natural possession or condition, it cannot confer its natural development. It cannot, therefore, indulge in coercion. It may have to endure divorce from some and let its erring brethren depart in peace. It can only live as it attracts and proves by its fruits.

The essential mechanisms with which a free church operates are a ministry, a service of worship, a program of education, and a form of government. It is the rational use and form of these

which make the difference between the "free" institution and other kinds. A free church is not better, in any sense in which we may use that term, because it is more "modern." It is better because it is more "free," more rationally organized to foster the enlargement of personalities, and their greater happiness.

The distinctive thing it requires of the ministry is a comprehensively ordered exposition based upon broad and intensive reflection upon the meaning of life as the minister has experienced it. It does not require the experience of either a genius or a saint—neither could be appreciated by a church contemporary with them—but it does require the note of authenticity. It demands that his loves be real, his sorrows genuine, and his moral sentiments drawn from real contact with specified evil. The case was not better put than by Emerson in the "Divinity School Address" when he urged the would-be divines to be themselves new-born bards of the Holy Ghost, to discard models and bloodless categories and elicit from their own experience the meanings they would proclaim. Nothing necessarily iconoclastic or anarchic was implied. Emerson was not Thoreau. It was an emphasis that he who preaches must hew to the authenticities of his own experience if he was to have anything possibly to contribute.

This is why the pulpit is granted "freedom" in the sense of the absence of predetermined standards. It is not that its exclamations are necessarily right, but that it is the only way to find out if they have any substance. The experience authentically voiced, communicates itself in two ways: First, in the degree to which many experiences of life have a considerable overlapping, at times a common quality among individuals. Clarity of definition communicates to people, not what they have not felt, but what feeling had not yet said as well, and hence did not *know* as well. Secondly, the freedom to express the peculiar and unique, if it be such, rationally accepts the responsibility to find some new way of attachment, or relation to, or combination with, the known differences, so that a fuller meaning may be seen by all sides.

A ministry is a necessity to a free church, not to find a full-time professional administrator to handle what many could do with sufficient time. Nor to any great degree is it needed to perform the priestly offices which may come at odd times when someone else who could with equal natural right do it, and who should be able to, is at work. The ministry is set aside primarily to get a prophetic voice, to get someone who has the time, who is committed to the effort, and hopefully has some skill in it, in making sense out of genuine human impulses, and a valid thrust for social ideals. The sermon may inform on some matters of fact. It may clarify the terms of some problems, but the pulpit is *not* primarily an educational platform nor a counselling service. Certainly it is not a place where one fallible human tells others what to do. The sermon is an art form *sui generis*. It is not the proper subject on most occasions for

an Open Forum afterwards. One accepts what he can and rejects the rest.

Can any minister stand up to this? Not at all perfectly, and never even adequately if he has any confusion between being *an* oracle, and *the* oracle. The difficulties with the task at best and the constant dangers of presumption must bring any rational person periodically to the brink of giving it up. He is rescued from that only by being able, sometimes, to meet the standards of his own conscience and sense of excellence, and of gaining the respect of individuals he respects.

The minister is by no manner of means precluded from personal commitments and strongly put convictions. In fact, these are the major goals at which to arrive. It is a thoroughly mistaken idea of objectivity which can make no positive statements. They should be made however as an artisan, and not as a partisan. Many a social action sermon has run afoul, but *not* primarily because it ploughed against a prejudice. It might not have had its facts straight. Or it may have frustrated people to death with ends so urgently and largely put, that no proximate plan of action was possible, short of a violent one. Or an honest-to-God prejudice was met with the tone of a counter moral absolute. If the preacher is still clear of all these errors, he will be out of trouble in any institution "free" enough to merit the word.

It should be emphasized, that the avoidance of stating and holding commitments as absolutes, is distinctly *not* the same as holding them tentatively. There is no virtue we can see, in constantly proclaiming that we hold our beliefs "tentatively." Not to claim moral absoluteness for them is to make a rational recognition from experience, that one has changed some, but not all, of his previous ideas. It is to recognize that he will probably change others. Which ideas, however, he cannot be sure. When he does, it will be out of some new wrestling of religion and experience with truth, which cannot presently be foreseen. To avoid the aspect of absoluteness is practically to recognize that one might be wrong, and hence to proceed with the utmost caution in any action which might bring conflict, breaking communication and making rationality impossible. If tentativeness belongs anywhere, it belongs in the initial stages of projecting plans. It belongs in the temporal dimension of the mind, but *not* in the action to which judgment has urged commitment, as a combination of belief and trust. Tentativeness adds nothing to moral considerations, as does declining pride and arrogance of the absolute. Tentativeness does deny the integrity of the psychology of an act, which has to be wholehearted to accomplish anything. Nobody is going to fall for our request to be a guinea pig and test "scientifically" an idea we say we are only tentative about. As rational people should we blame them for such a refusal?

The maintenance of a free pulpit is one of the most difficult, but most rewarding tasks a minister and congregation can effect. It

takes the both of them. Perhaps it can be summarized this way: the minister is not the only one expected to be dedicated to the development of freedom. He is so expected and must be allowed to be. That defines the ultimate rational responsibility of both pulpit and pew.

Worship is essential to a free church. It is, in brief, the celebration of things of worth. It is the highest level on which the group can act together, and they should meet there, if not easily anywhere else. The worship celebration should emphasize the continuities, the the distillations out of time that have been, and are, and which the group profoundly believes will be enduring as long as good will, enlightenment, or hope exist. In content, the celebrations should run the gamut of the virtues men hold to be good, the insights generally believed to be true, and whatever articulations create a sense of Beauty. Songs, prayers, or words of aspiration, meditations, and the like, should emphasize a consecration to life; should elevate examples which give direction to human endeavor; express the faith of men in themselves; hold up a high moral purpose; and to be products of those who have had courage through failure and who faced with real valor their supreme tragedies.

The chief pitfalls of the worship service are obscurity of meaning, archaism or lack of clarity in form, and sentimentality—shallowness or superficiality of emotional expression, lack of an adequate esthetic marriage of form and content, and above all—whatever the range of emotion expressed—from the tragic to the ecstatic, the range should be as full as life is full—worship must be disciplined by the control of some rational end. Worship is an art, but no more than any other art does it exist for its own sake. It is an endeavor to express the mystical quality of all experience, without becoming mysticism; to sound the overtones of meaning without losing roots; to adumbrate a universal harmony which is perhaps not yet, but which people yet feel *could be*.

No art form is excluded. No literature is exclusive. No period either before or after Bach is sacred. It is only of concern that what is used fits and is adequate to its function. A sermon may fail without disaster. If the worship service falls flat, the whole service is lost.

There must also be an educational program. Far, far too much is left to the pulpit which is most inadequately designed for it. Growth needs more study, more time, more discussion, more interchange of ideas than can be done without work and planning. Effort must be put by the individual into his growth. The subject matter of education will vary with the interests and necessities which the problems of time and circumstance dictate. Education should, however, clarify the terms of any problem, get the relevant facts, produce that real engagement of thought which focuses upon getting a reasonable plan of action upon which there can be moral agreement and the enlistment of support. Group discussion is highly important.

Without it an individual may only know what an idea is good for. After it he may also know what an idea is *not* good for, which is highly relevant also to a rational conclusion. At the same time, in these days of high hopes for "group dynamics," we must remember that no group thinks except as the individuals in it do. Not every individual is thinking just because he is talking. He may only be having an emotional catharsis in words. The place and role of expertness can be overemphasized, but it usually is not. There is no substitute for the person who has specific knowledge, or for the method of inquiry which can get the facts which are facts, in their historical context. If it is relevant education, it will be sensitive to what people can do, and how much they can do. Usually the better the end, and the better it is defined, the more narrow the action possible, or the more obvious it is that it needs a lot of outside help to put it over. A little genuine education would put a pin in the hot-air balloons of many hell-bent-for-leather mass meetings and give weight to more resolutions by informing them with a greater degree of thought.

All of this is not to make of the educational process the drudgery in the name of which many people shun it. Education is the mastery of all of the information relevant and necessary to make a rational plan to achieve a goal. Lincoln used to say that he was never satisfied until he had bounded an idea "north, south, east, and west." There is no greater sense of security than comes from having at least relatively so boxed the compass. Nor is there greater esthetic delight and pleasure. Whatever techniques may make the process more palatable are to be encouraged and used. There is, however, *no* substitute for considerable personal effort, and no really easy way to get the job done.

Finally, all communities, and not less the free ones, are a problem in government. A church may be quite small, but it faces the problem of providing a method for adjusting honestly held differences on policy. It will have quite different types of people in it. If it cannot have them, or does not, there is something wrong with it as a church. The best example known to us of a liberal political form, is that of representative democracy. Basic principles should be thought through together sufficient to form a Constitution. General procedures should be rationalized by some plan which assures that everyone may have *a* voice, but no one has *the* voice. With so much, there may be no general disagreement. However, there must also be this much *more*: a recognition that even a free institution, as an institution, and therefore as a government of sorts, is itself something different from and greater than, the sum of its parts. It is the repository of the tradition of many individuals dead and gone, enshrining the excellency no longer living in the flesh, but to be protected in spirit. Thus, although the present people are the immediate source of its authority, the objects of its service and the growing point of its adjustment to the new duties of new

occasions, this same present group must sense in its continuity through many past generations, and hopefully through many to come, the times when it must protect the minority; the times when it must protect the majority from itself insofar as it can do so by delaying impulse. In these days also when "liberalism" may be a sheep's skin in a wolf's frame, people must sense the times in which its structure is needed to protect the majority from a subversive few. We have heard of groups experimenting with the abandonment of Constitutions and rules of procedure and ordered process. May Providence bale them out of the wreck, if a skilful few try to manipulate them!

This is an age-old problem in political philosophy, never so succinctly put as by Lincoln, as to whether a government must be too strong for liberty, or too weak to exist. There is no way of avoiding this problem this side of the Anarchist's Utopia. There is one thing worse than possible tyranny of reasoned structure, which reason in a liberal political form can correct. That is, no structure at all which has integrity and power publicly recognized by its constituents and commanding their commitment.

The free church's only reason for existence is to be the pilot society for the broadest human society conceivable, and one at least coextensive with the inhabitants of the globe. It must show itself capable of creating that public philosophy which will adhere to structure, modifying it when necessary, but in an orderly process which preserves rather than fragments the whole. If it cannot, then any larger social freedoms are not long for us. If our light goes out, the light of freedom progressing to its actualization by means of the disciplined thought of Reason goes out, then revolution by revelation will have to be tried, and it surely will be.

Charles W. Phillips has been minister of the First Unitarian Church, Des Moines, Iowa, since 1949. He trained for the ministry at Bethany College (A.B.) and at the University of Chicago (A.M. & B.D). He was previously a minister in the Church of the Disciples of Christ. His paper was delivered at the Conference of the National Unitarian Ministers' Association, at Detroit, August 1955.

E. G. Lee has been Editor of *The Inquirer*, the Unitarian and Free Religious British Weekly, since 1939. He is also minister of the Buxton Unitarian Christian Church, London. He trained for the Ministry at Manchester College, Oxford and was previously minister at Bolton and Shrewsbury. His published works include *Christianity in Chains*, *Mass Man and Religion* and *Christianity and the New Situation*, besides several novels.

H. Lismer Short is Tutor in Christian History at Manchester College, Oxford. He was a Scholar of Peterhouse, Cambridge, a Dr. Williams's Scholar, and a Hibbert Scholar at Harvard 1929-30. He holds degrees from Cambridge, London and Oxford, and was trained for the Ministry at Manchester College, Oxford. He previously held ministries at Rochdale, Buxton, Macclesfield and Banbury. He has done historical broadcasts for the B.B.C. notably on *Servetus and Castellio* (See also *Faith and Freedom* Vol 6 Part III). He also does historical reviewing for prominent English journals.

*How I came to discover Blake**

S. FOSTER DAMON

I REMEMBER vividly the first time I encountered the name of William Blake. For it came with that impact which is so characteristic of his work: the flash of inspiration and the simultaneous response—inexplicable, as it leaves the reason completely baffled; yet so authentic that it cannot be ignored.

I was a mere boy—the date was 1905 I am pretty sure. I was taking the train at Boston for our summer home on Cape Ann, and I bought a magazine which had just started, to occupy the hour of travel along the North Shore. It was a cheap, pulp-paper magazine named *Argosy*, which paid no authors as it specialized in extracts from the classics. There were exciting episodes out of Victor Hugo's novels; there was an extract from Swinburne beginning "Down where the thicket is thicker with thorns than with leaves in the summer"; something about a snake-woman called "Our Lady of Pain," which set me giggling; and an extraordinary thing, praised by Lamb, called "The Tiger," by one William Blake.

Tiger, tiger, burning bright

In the forests of the night . . .

It didn't make sense, but it was unforgettable, and I set about memorizing it.

Why should it have made sense to me? I had never heard of the Wrath of God, except in some negligible Sunday School stories. My father came of a Puritan family, which turned Unitarian when Unitarianism swept Massachusetts in the late Eighteenth Century. My mother was a Pennsylvania Quaker, of a Quaker family which emigrated in the late Seventeenth Century, on the invitation of William Penn. We children, however, went to a Congregational church, where we were instructed to leave "Hell" out of the Apostles' Creed when we memorized it. So I knew nothing of the Wrath of God. Nor did I know until long after that Blake believed that God manifested only through Man, and that the Tiger was about that Wrath in Man which breaks out into Revolution, and disposes of the errors of ages by burning down the forests of the night, and thus has its part in the scheme of things which we call Providence. All I knew was, here was a poem which I never wanted to forget. And that Christmas I set it to music, as a present for my mother.

It must have been within a year or so that I went to our excellent public library in Newton, Massachusetts, and wickedly looked up "Hell" in the catalogue, trying to find out something about this place we must never mention, because it was swearing. The card catalogue yielded three names: Dante, Swedenborg, and Blake. So

* This paper was read by Professor Foster Damon at the Blake Dinner of the National Book League, in London on November 28th, 1955.

I read the "Inferno" with fascination, couldn't get interested in Swedenborg, and as for Blake—what the librarian gave me was the first volume of the Ellis-Yeats commentary, with none of the original text. Nevertheless, on the cover was a beautiful picture—the "Reunion of the Soul and Body," from *Blair's Grave*—and that was also unforgettable.

Now my mother believed thoroughly in education—she taught all her children and grandchildren to read and write during our summer vacations, so we could skip a grade in the public schools; and it was part of her scheme to take us every now and then to the Boston Art Museum. And there, on one visit, we saw an exhibition of Blake watercolours. These had been bought from Mrs. Ann Gilchrist when, after finishing with Blake, she looked for another great man, and came to America to meet Walt Whitman. There was a *Paradise Lost* series, and other separates—"The Plague in Egypt," "Ezekiel's Vision," "The Woman Taken in Adultery," "The King of Babylon in Hell," "The Plague in London," and so forth. They were fascinatingly strange, yet authentic. And so I met Blake the artist.

After that the name of Blake kept turning up. The *Songs of Innocence* came first into my ken, where I recognized that curiously limpid poem "The Piper," also "The Lamb," which I didn't like, as it was the kind of thing we had to memorize and recite at Sunday School, trying one's best not to seem cute the way my mother wanted. These poems were in Whittier's anthology for children, which mother read to us. And in the *Songs of Experience*—generally overlooked in those days—I found again my beloved Tiger.

The general attitude at that time was that the author of the *Songs of Innocence* was himself an Innocent, an inspired simpleton who sang sweetly about children, but then lost his mind; consequently his later works were negligible, being practically feeble-minded.

Then, by and by, I was in college. But Harvard thought so little of our poet that he was omitted completely from a course on Romantic poets, although somebody wrote a class-paper called condescendingly "The Innocence of Mr. Blake." Mister indeed!

I now had money to buy books of my own, and in a Boston sale of remainders I got Blake's *Letters* and the Housman edition of the poems. Thus I met Blake's prose, and above all "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell." I think in the same sale was the Rossetti edition, which contained the first printing of "Tiriel."

By now something was definitely happening to me, which I can best describe by saying that this crazy man, this simpleton, was setting me right about certain fundamentals, and opening gates—sensorial and intellectual—so that I could live more abundantly. It was an exhilaration which made Shelley sound hysterical and Keats timid. But the trouble was that, in the first place, one could not get a complete and reliable text; and in the second place, no living human being understood them.

The Harvard University Library was handsomely stocked with everything except Blake originals. (They have since repaired that oversight). In Harry Widener's collection was a *Songs of Innocence*, also a photostat of a lost copy (since recovered); and, of course, in Harvard's Fogg Art Museum there were the engravings of *Job* and of Dante. Also Professor Norton's re-issue of the *Job*.

Then—oh then—in 1913 appeared Sampson's Oxford edition of the Poetical Works, which included selections from the three epics. As I already owned the Maclagan and Russell texts of *Milton* and *Jerusalem*, that made everything complete, except for the *Four Zoas*. So I had a wonderful idea: all I had to do to understand Blake was to get the Oxford edition interleaved, then copy out everything that anybody had said about the meaning of any poems, book, or passage, and, when that was all done, I merely had to fit the pieces together, and there would be Blake's secret made plain!

So to work I went that summer, copying everything—though I confess I compressed Swinburne and stinted Ellis and Yeats. It was not too much of a job, as comparatively little had been written explaining Blake. It was not till then, I think, that I came upon the wonderful commentary of Joseph Wicksteed on the *Job*. And that was a lamp held high in the wilderness—the writings of those people politely amused by innocent Mr. Blake, and of those who showed off how much they knew at the expense of Mr. Blake, and of those people who declared that anything they didn't instantly understand was where Blake's mind failed him, and of those who wanted to put Blake down in his proper place once and forever (that still goes on), in short, "the forests of the night."

Anyhow, when I had finished my chore and sat down to fit the pieces together, nothing happened. Nothing fitted. The critical corpus was a chaos. Blake yet remained a mystery.

Now mind you, I knew nothing about modern psychology. I had heard of Freud, who had delivered his first public lectures only a few miles away, at Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts; and I had turned from his doctrines with natural repulsion. I had never heard of Jung, who was so much closer to Blake. I had no genuine realization of what Blake was writing about. It was just a riddle, a magnificent puzzle, a challenge—something which was beginning to obsess me.

But then I had another idea. I would read everything that Blake himself read, and thus get into the current of his ideas. That would be easy, I thought, as that unschooled self-taught genius was not supposed to have read very much. And how wrong the critics were!

And here I began to discover Blake's ideas. There were Tom Paine and Mary Wollstonecraft and other Deists and revolutionists. There was Thomas Taylor, with his translations from the Greek, where he had found his own mystical experience. There was mysticism itself, brilliantly analysed by William James; and Evelyn Underhill's fascinating survey of mystical literature. And there were

the occultists, especially Cornelius Agrippa, and the alchemists—Boehme and Paracelsus, who led me to Thomas Vaughan, the undervalued brother of Henry the Silurist. And alchemy was another mystery, demanding exploration, on its own account.

Of course, in the meanwhile, I was working away at the clues which Blake himself dropped (making out a card catalogue), working out the details of the stories, figuring out the genealogies—but these were not easy going. Why should Blake call Orc the first-born of Enitharmon, and a few lines further on speak of Rintrah as the eldest? Why, when Orc was present, were the four sons absent, and vice versa? (Eventually I figured it out: the four sons were the analysis of Orc just as the four Zoas were the analysis of Albion). And I can remember clearly my excitement when, from their attributes, I figured out who the Four Zoas actually were—and what a flood of light the discovery shed!

One never could tell where a clue might turn up. The Neo-Platonists identified water with Matter; and lo, so did Blake. What a lot *that* cleared up! Take Noah's Flood, for example—then was the time that Man became materialized. And, ah yes! The Rainbow of the Covenant was also water—but uplifted and etherialized—symbolizing the resurrection of Man from the death in matter, from the natural to the spiritual body.

By this time, I was so obsessed with these problems that once I actually signed Blake's name to a cheque. It was no good!

Somehow or other, I learned that there were copies of Blake's books in New York. Naively, with no letters of introduction and not even any preliminary letters of inquiry, I went to New York and simply telephoned. But the name of Blake was ample introduction. "Come on over," said Mr. White; and across Brooklyn Bridge I went to his home where a huge reproduction of the Creator with the compasses dominated his library. There I went through his entire collection: the two manuscript books of poetry, the watercolors for Young's *Night Thoughts* (which Mrs. Emerson, his daughter, later gave to the British Museum), the illuminated books, including the unique *Ahania* and the unique *Book of Los*. I telephoned the Henry Huntington Library (now removed to California) and worked there some days, getting permission to use Blake's version of the Lord's Prayer. I telephoned the Morgan Memorial Library, and was told to come the next day, when they got out for me their Blake material, particularly their magnificent *America* and their *Jerusalem*. I suddenly noticed that the librarian was quietly taking notes of my chatter as I turned the leaves. And in the New York Public Library was a *Milton*, carefully not catalogued, but available if one knew enough to ask.

Of all these books I took descriptions, page by page, because they all differed. And thus I met William Blake the book-maker.

Pretty soon now, I began writing. I went very slowly at first, and I had a terrible time with my second chapter, which should

have been the easiest, as it was only about the Eighteenth Century.

By this time I had come to know Amy Lowell well—that great lady and exciting poet, who was causing great controversy by her brilliant poems and her championship of Imagism and all the other living American poets. She owned a *Thel* and a *Visions* bound together—she had bought them years before in London, on returning from a trip to Egypt. Tired by the formal Egyptian art, she had remembered the beautiful Blake books owned by the Hooper family, which as a little girl she had loved to look at; and she remembered her resolve to buy some for herself when she grew up. A frank atheist, she nevertheless loved Blake's books, and my explanations fascinated her. So every time I finished a chapter, I would take it over to Brookline to try out on her; and after a wonderful meal we would go into her great library, and would discuss until the last trolley car was about to leave. Her liberal sympathies, her imaginative insight, and her shrewd common sense were invaluable. And she got sufficiently interested to buy for herself a *Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, and wrote a poem on "Energy is Eternal delight."

In 1920 occurred the great Grolier Club exhibition of Blake's works, to which the great collectors sent whatever they had. I was invited to lecture—my first public lecture. Then Professor Forbes, with my assistance, took the whole thing up to Harvard, for exhibition in the Fogg Art Museum. I wrote the explanatory notes, which got people talking all over the place. But there were many whose attitude was "Ugh, the nasty thing, it's alive." I recollect the grand figure of President Emeritus Eliot coming in—a leading Unitarian, he had little use for the claptrap of accumulated nonsense about religion—and here he was, surrounded by angels and devils and strange deities. At last he saw the engraved miniature of little Thomas Malkin. "*That* I like," he pronounced; and I hope that the memory of one of our greatest educators will not suffer at the sad fact that he had selected the one thing in the whole exhibition which Blake had not designed.

That fall, I persuaded Ferris Greenslet, of Houghton Mifflin, to publish my book when it was finished—there were only three or four chapters to be done. But they were the chapters on the epics. Then I went to Denmark with Robert Hillyer on a project of translating Danish verse. On the way we stopped off for two weeks in London. Here at last I met Geoffrey Keynes, for whom I had been describing the Blake books in America; and I thank him again for his courtesy and generosity to the wild barbarian bewildered in London. And at last, in the British Museum, I saw the *Four Zoas*. I had finally got the 1908 Ellis edition, which contained an extraordinarily unreliable text, and I kept busy checking it against the original manuscript—only lines and special passages—I couldn't possibly do the whole thing. And so to Denmark, where I finished my book.

When I brought the manuscript back, in the spring of 1921, Mr. Greenslet was not wholly pleased. The three or four chapters, with the long commentaries, had swelled the manuscript far beyond what he had originally calculated. It took him some time to recalculate; and I think the fact that I kept adding to the manuscript bit by bit may have decided him to get it out and over with. So he arranged with Constable to issue an edition of 1,000 copies—250 for England and 750 for America.

So at last, in 1924—incredibly, 31 years ago—the book came out. I had qualms about its reception. I had chosen a subject which would never have won academic approval. I was publishing ideas which orthodoxy would not like. I had taken seriously a notorious freak. I had plunged into his chaos and emerged with things which to me were wild and wonderful, but would others take them so? In short, had I made a fool of myself?

But I did not have to wait long for reviews, and they were all I could have hoped—long, signed, front page in the literary supplements. Evidently the world had been catching up to Blake—we still are—and welcomed whatever light I shed. The book sold quickly. Constable's estimate of the English appetite for one of their greatest men had been too low, and they had to order more copies to be sent back from America.

And I discovered that I had made a new set of friends, most of whom I have never seen, but scattered all over the world—in Japan, in India and, above all, in England. Evidently New York and Boston were not the only places where the name of Blake was a sufficient introduction.

In 1947, my book was re-issued by Peter Smith in New York, by some photographic process which allowed no corrections or additions. And what I could have done!

I should like to have added to my first chapter, on Blake as a mystic; for it is there that some of the orthodox have balked. Their argument is that Blake did not reach the mystical experience by the standard method of meditation, of shutting out the world, and even one's self, until a spiritual vacuum is produced which God then fills. No, Blake did not do that. But there are many ways to God. The ecstasy can be attained by sheer intellection, as in Plato; by absorption in nature, as with Wordsworth; by sexual love, as in the Persian mystics (sublimated in St. Theresa and St. John of the Cross); even by dancing, as with the whirling dervishes and voodooists. In fact, any path may eventually lead to divinity, if pursued far enough.

Blake found it by opening, not closing, the senses; he found it in love; also in nature—but you may find a heaven in a wild flower only if you see not with, but through, the eye (it's not so difficult). He found it, not by denying life, but by living more abundantly, and we have the word of Jesus himself that that is what he came to teach. One may attain it by becoming as a child or by facing

courageously our misfortunes, as did Job. The Way is Life itself, which if lived fully must lead to the Truth. Thus, all things lead to God.

Once that chapter is fixed, I should like to add somewhere something about the remarkable confirmation of Blake's theories by the modern psychologists. The parallels, especially in the writings of Jung, are amazing. I did not realize this until 1926, when I published an article about it in the *Saturday Review of Literature*, on December 4th.

Then I should like to re-write entirely my chapter on the *Book of Thel*. When I wrote it, I followed the idea of Yeats and Ellis that it depicted a soul shrinking from incarnation in the flesh. Well, that may be so, in the vaster scheme of things. But now I believe that it comes much closer to our life as we know it. It is simply the study of a girl on the verge of womanhood, who is destined to leave Innocence for Experience. The symbols are easy, and are explained in the illustrations and the text itself. She questions the value of her own innocence (the lily), wonders about the function of the male (the cloud, the fructifier), faces the thought of motherhood (the clod of clay with the baby worm). To put it familiarly, she does not want to become a lump of mud like Mrs. Jones, who has lost all her youth and beauty. It would be death to all that she is. At last she comes to the point of this same death—her grave—the death which is merely change from one state to another—and there her senses begin to awake to the coming life. The voice of her flesh terrifies her, and she flees. But we know the time is near when she must leave the Vale of Har for the new life.

Thel, in short, is a re-writing of Milton's *Comus*, but in biological terms, not the moral ones.

And now I must pay tribute to the spirit of Max Plowman, that brave soul, who found in Blake so much that makes life worth living. For it was he who discovered the structure of the *Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, and also of the *Four Zoas*. It was he who led the way to the discovery of the fundamental meaning of both books, and I should like to incorporate his discoveries in my chapters on those subjects.

As for *Jerusalem*, there I concentrated on the commentary instead of the structure of the whole. It is perhaps the world's most difficult book—unless we take into account Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake*, which is in many ways a copy of *Jerusalem*. Joseph Wicksteed's commentary is invaluable; I cannot say enough in its praise. But I think he will be the first to admit that it is not all and everything. Now it so happens that a former pupil of mine was working on the same problem for two or three years—Karl Kiralis, now teaching at St. Lawrence University. He presented his findings in a Ph.D. thesis, and he made some wonderful discoveries. I cannot give you all that he discovered—and of course, much of it parallels Mr. Wicksteed's discoveries; but I can tell you what he found out

about the basic structure. The poem, of course, deals with the fall and salvation of man. You recollect that it is in four chapters. The first chapter deals with the fall, and the three others with Albion's recovery. These three outline the religious history of man, also of men as individuals, for we all repeat what the race has gone through.

The first is the religion of law, established as Judaism in the childhood of civilization. The second is the religion of the youth; he becomes a sceptic or Deist, rejecting much but still clinging to the official moral virtues. The third is the religion of Maturity (or Old Age, as Blake calls it), which is Christianity, though now dogmatized and overshadowed by its errors about sex. But once that is worked through and cast off, the true Saviour appears, and man is united again with God.

Blake was a hundred years ahead of his times, a twentieth-century figure. He had no ready-made vocabulary—even the word "psychology" had not been invented. Where Jacob Boehme struggled with religious vocabulary, then added to it that of astrology, then that of Paracelsan alchemy as he understood it, he still found language inadequate, and used words which his subconscious invented. Blake, instead, used symbols, starting with the established ones and invented the others as necessity required. We all know what the Lamb signifies; but he had to invent the Tiger, to represent the other aspect of God. So his symbology developed.

And his meaning has been coming through for a long while. A doctoral thesis might well be written on his all-permeating influence, covering the novels and the plays and the poems which have used Blake material. The world, in short, is catching up to him. We understand before we discover. Much of what Blake discovered has been rediscovered independently by the psychologists.

And the more we live, the more we discover what Blake meant; but we do not discover it out of books, but out of our own lives. And as the years recede, and the Bicentenary approaches, his figure looms larger and larger. For in my opinion, he was one of the greatest Englishmen, and one of the great men of all time.

S. Foster Damon is Professor of English at Brown University, Providence, R.I. and author of the epoch making study *William Blake: His Philosophy and Symbols*.

Napoleon W. Lovely has been minister of the First parish Church, Norwell, Mass. since 1953. He is A.M. and S.T.B. of Harvard. He was Chaplain with the U.S. Army 1942-45 and subsequently held ministries at San Antonio and Bedford, Mass.